



# Milan Baptist Church

31 Ferman Street, P.O. Box 147  
Milan, Michigan 48160

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[www.milanbaptist.org](http://www.milanbaptist.org)

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**SUBJECT: Constitution (Adopted: November 17, 2003)**

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## ARTICLE 1 - NAME

This church shall be known as the “Milan Baptist Church of Milan, Michigan,” under which name we are incorporated as an ecclesiastical body in the State of Michigan.

When signatures are required following the sanction of action which has been approved by the church membership, the Chairman of the Board of Deacons is to sign any papers as president, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees as vice-president, and the Clerk as secretary.



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## ARTICLE 2 - CHARACTER

### SECTION 1 - AUTHORITY

Its government is vested in the body of believers of whom it is composed. It is subject to no earthly authority but rather to God and His Word.

This authority has been summarized in this written Constitution and all written Documents which have been approved by the Board of Deacons, as long as such Documents are in complete harmony with this Constitution and do not in any way contradict this Constitution.

These written Documents include Policies and Processes.

### SECTION 2 – MEMBERSHIP DOCTRINE

1. We believe, without reservation, in the divine authority and verbal inspiration of the whole of the Old and New Testaments as originally written. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:21; Matthew 5:18).
2. We believe in the eternal trinity, one God in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; I Timothy 3:16; John 1:1; John 10:31-33; 2 Corinthians 3:17).
3. We believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate (John 1:1, 14, I Timothy 3:16, Hebrews 2:9, 16), that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and that He was born of the virgin Mary. (Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:20, Luke 1:35).
4. We believe that through disobedience to God, Adam incurred the penalties of physical and spiritual death which passed upon the whole human race. (Romans 3:23; Romans 5:12-14, Ephesians 2:1, I Corinthians 15:22).
5. We believe that Jesus Christ died for our sins through the shedding of His blood, that He was raised again for our justification, and that by Him all that believe are justified from all eternal penalty of sin and its accompanying guilt and therefore have eternal life. (Hebrews 9:22; Romans 4:25; I Corinthians 15:3; Acts 13:38-39; John 5:24, Romans 6:23).
6. We believe that a person who is a born again Christian, as part of the sanctification process, will evidence a life of separation from sin. (Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:17-24; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-7; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 3:4-14).



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7. We believe in the new birth through the operation of the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 1:13; Romans 8:11; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14).
8. We believe that Jesus Christ rose from the dead on the third day, later ascended into Heaven and is now our Advocate with the Father in heaven. (Luke 24:6, 7; John 20:9, 16; I John 2:1,2; Romans 10:9; Hebrews 4:14-16).
9. We believe in the eternal salvation of all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and the endless punishment of all those who do not believe and reject Him. (Matthew 8:11, 12; John 3:16-18, 36, 10:27-28; Acts 16:31; Revelation 20:15; Romans 10:9, 10, 13; Isaiah 66:24).
10. We believe in the pre-tribulational rapture of the Church and the pre-millennial return of the Lord, personally and visibly, to institute the promised Kingdom. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Acts 1:11; Isaiah 9:6, 7, 11:1-9; Revelation 20:4-6; 1 Corinthians 15:50-54).
11. We believe in the bringing in of a new heaven and earth as the final state. (2 Peter 3:7-13, Revelation 21-22, Isaiah 65:17, 66: 22-24).

## SECTION 3 – TEACHING & PREACHING BELIEF STATEMENT

### 1. The Holy Scriptures

We believe that the Bible is God's written revelation to man, and that the sixty-six books of the Bible given to us by the Holy Spirit constitute the plenary Word of God in written form (inspired equally in all parts) (1 Corinthians 2:7-14; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

We believe that the Word of God is an objective, propositional revelation (1 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 2:13), verbally inspired (2 Timothy 3:16), completely inerrant in the original documents, infallible, and God-breathed. We affirm the literal, grammatical-historical Scriptural interpretation that the opening chapters of Genesis present creation in six literal days (Genesis 1:31; Exodus 31:17).

We believe that the Bible constitutes the only infallible rule of faith and practice (Matthew 5:18; 24:35; John 10:35; 16:12-13; 17:17; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

We believe that God spoke in His written Word by a process of dual authorship. The Holy Spirit so superintended the human authors that, through their individual personalities and different styles of writing, they composed and recorded God's Word to man (2 Peter 1:20-21) without error in the whole or in the part (Matthew 5:18; 2 Timothy 3:16). We believe that, whereas several applications of any given passage of



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Scripture may exist, each passage of Scripture has only one true interpretation. The meaning of Scripture is to be found as one diligently applies the literal grammatical-historical method of interpretation under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit (John 7:17; 16:12-15; 1 Corinthians 2:7-15; 1 John 2:20). Believers have the responsibility to ascertain carefully the true intent and meaning of Scripture, recognizing that proper application is binding on all generations. Yet the truth of Scripture stands in judgment of men; never do men stand in judgment of it.

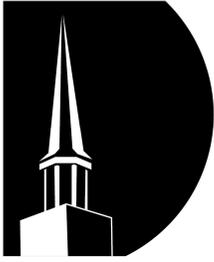
We believe the inerrancy of Scripture can essentially be maintained through the process of translation. Throughout this translation process, we believe that individual words as well as the form and structure in the original language should be translated for individual words as well as the form and structure in the new language whenever possible. Throughout the translation, editorial interpretation must be avoided or minimized with great care, including gender-inclusive language when such language diminishes translation accuracy. We believe that versions primarily based on idea-for-idea translation through dynamic/functional equivalency (e.g., The New Living Translation, The Good News Bible) or paraphrase renderings (e.g., The Message, The Living Bible) are not appropriate for teaching or preaching and should be infrequently and cautiously used in personal Bible study (2 Peter 1:20-21). In addition, while we believe in the inerrancy and verbal inspiration of the original manuscripts, we believe that no copy or translation of these original manuscripts (e.g., King James Version) is directly inspired or inerrant.

## 2. God

We believe that there is but one living and true God (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7; 1 Corinthians 8:4), an infinite, all knowing Spirit (John 4:24), perfect in all His attributes, one in essence, eternally existing in three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14)—each equally deserving worship and obedience.

## 3. God the Father

We believe that God the Father, the first Person of the Trinity, orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace (Psalm 145:8-9; 1 Corinthians 8:6). He is the Creator of all things (Genesis 1:1-31; Ephesians 3:9). As the only absolute and omnipotent Ruler in the universe, He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption (Psalm 103:19; Romans 11:36). His fatherhood involves both His designation within the Trinity and His relationship with mankind. As Creator He is Father to all men (Ephesians 4:6), but He is spiritual Father only to believers (Romans 8:14; 2 Corinthians 6:18). He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass (Ephesians 1:11). He continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events (1 Chronicles 29:11). In His sovereignty He is neither author nor approver of sin (Habakkuk 1:13; John 8:38-47), nor does He abridge the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures (1 Peter 1:17). He has graciously chosen from eternity past those whom He would have as His own (Ephesians 1:4-6); He saves from sin all who come to Him through Jesus Christ; He



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adopts as His own all those who come to Him; and He becomes, upon adoption, Father to His own (John 1:12; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5; Hebrews 12:5-9).

#### 4. God the Son

We believe that Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Trinity, possesses all the divine excellences, and in these He is coequal, consubstantial, and coeternal with the Father (John 10:30; 14:9).

We believe that God the Father created all things according to His own will, through His Son, Jesus Christ, by whom all things continue in existence and in operation (John 1:3; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:2).

We believe that in the incarnation (God becoming man) Christ surrendered only the prerogatives of deity but nothing of the divine essence, either in degree or kind.

In His incarnation, the eternally existing second Person of the Trinity accepted all the essential characteristics of humanity and so became the God Man (Philippians 2:5-8; Colossians 2:9).

We believe that Jesus Christ represents humanity and deity in indivisible oneness (Micah 5:2; John 5:23; 14:9-10; Colossians 2:9).

We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ was virgin-born (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23, 25; Luke 1:26-35); that He was God incarnate (John 1:1, 14); and that the purpose of the incarnation was to reveal God, redeem men, and rule over God's kingdom (Psalm 2:7-9; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:29; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 7:25-26; 1 Peter 1:18-19).

We believe that, in the incarnation, the second person of the Trinity laid aside His right to the full prerogatives of coexistence with God, was made into human likeness, and took on an existence appropriate to a servant while never divesting Himself of His divine attributes (Philippians 2:5-8).

We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through the shedding of His innocent blood and sacrificial death on the cross and that His death was voluntary, vicarious, substitutionary, propitiatory, and redemptive (John 10:15; Romans 3:24-25; 5:8; 1 Peter 2:24).

We believe that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead and that He is now ascended to the right hand of the Father, where He now mediates as our Advocate and High Priest (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:38-39; Acts 2:30-31; Romans 4:25; 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; 9:24; 1 John 2:1).

We believe that in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave, God confirmed the deity of His Son and gave proof that God has accepted the atoning work of Christ on the cross. Jesus' bodily resurrection is also



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the guarantee of a future resurrection life for all believers (John 5:26-29; 14:19; Romans 1:4; 4:25; 6:5-10; 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23).

We believe that Jesus Christ will return to receive the church, which is His Body, to Himself at the rapture, and returning with His church in glory, will establish His millennial kingdom on earth (Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 20).

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the One through whom God will judge all mankind (John 5:22-23):

- a. Believers (1 Corinthians 3:10-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10)
- b. Living inhabitants of the earth at His glorious return (Matthew 25:31-46).
- c. Unbelieving dead at the Great White Throne (Revelation 20:11-15).

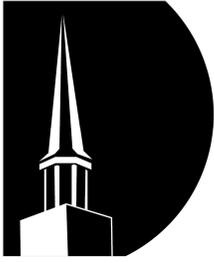
As the Mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5), the Head of His Body the church (Ephesians 1:22; 5:23; Colossians 1:18), and the coming universal King, who will reign on the throne of David (Isaiah 9:6; Luke 1:31-33), He is the final Judge of all who fail to place their trust in Him as Lord and Savior (Matthew 25:14-46; Acts 17:30-31). We believe that on the basis of the efficacy of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, the believing sinner is freed from the punishment, the penalty, the power, and one day the very presence of sin; and that he is declared righteous, given eternal life, and adopted into the family of God (Romans 3:25; 5:8-9; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18).

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

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, eternal, underived, possessing all the attributes of personality and deity including intellect (1 Corinthians 2:10-13), emotions (Ephesians 4:30), will (1 Corinthians 12:11), eternality (Hebrews 9:14), omnipresence (Psalm 139:7-10), omniscience (Isaiah 40:13-14), omnipotence (Romans 15:13), and truthfulness (John 16:13). In all the divine attributes He is coequal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son (Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3-4; 28:25-26; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; and Jeremiah 31:31-34 with Hebrews 10:15-17).

We believe that the work of the Holy Spirit is to execute the divine will with relation to all mankind. We recognize His sovereign activity in creation (Genesis 1:2), the incarnation (Matthew 1:18), the written revelation (2 Peter 1:20-21), and the work of salvation (John 3:5-7).

We believe that the work of the Holy Spirit in this age began at Pentecost when He came from the Father as promised by Christ (John 14:16-17; 15:26) to initiate and establish the building of the Body of Christ, which is His church (1 Corinthians 12:13). The broad scope of His divine activity includes convicting the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ; and transforming



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believers into the image of Christ (John 16:7-9; Acts 1:5; 2:4; Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 2:22).

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the supernatural and sovereign Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13). The Holy Spirit also indwells, sanctifies, instructs, empowers believers for service, and seals them until the day of redemption (Romans 8:9; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 1:13-14).

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the divine Teacher, who guided the apostles and prophets into all truth as they committed to writing God's revelation, the Bible. Every believer possesses the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit from the moment of salvation, and the duty of all those born of the Spirit is to be filled with (controlled by) the Spirit (John 16:13; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 5:18; 2 Peter 1:19-21; 1 John 2:20, 27).

We believe that the Holy Spirit distributes spiritual gifts to the church according to His plan. The Holy Spirit glorifies neither Himself nor His gifts by ostentatious displays, but He does glorify Christ by implementing His work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the most holy faith (John 16:13-14; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 3:18).

We believe, in this respect, that God the Holy Spirit is sovereign in the bestowing of all His gifts for the perfecting of the saints today and that speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles in the beginning days of the church were for the purpose of pointing to and authenticating the apostles as revealers of divine truth and were not intended to be characteristic of the lives of believers during the church age (1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 13:8-10; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 4:7-12; Hebrews 2:4).

## 6. Man

We believe that man was directly and immediately created by God in His image and likeness. Man was created free of sin with a rational nature, intelligence, free will, self-determination, and moral responsibility to God (Genesis 2:7, 15-25; James 3:9).

We believe that God's intention in the creation of man was that man should glorify God, enjoy God's fellowship, live his life in the will of God, and by this accomplish God's purpose for man in the world (Isaiah 43:7; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11).

We believe that in Adam's sin of disobedience to the revealed will and Word 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 that which is acceptable to God apart from divine grace. With no recuperative powers to enable him to recover himself, man is hopelessly lost. Man's salvation is thereby wholly of God's grace through the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus



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Christ (Genesis 2:16-17; 3:1-19; John 3:36; Romans 3:23; 6:23; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 Timothy 2:13-14; 1 John 1:8).

We believe that because all men were in Adam, a nature corrupted by Adam's sin has been transmitted to all men of all ages, Jesus Christ being the only exception. All men are thus sinners by nature, by choice, and by divine declaration (Psalm 14:1-3; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:9-18, 23; 5:10-12).

## **7. Salvation**

We believe that salvation is wholly of God by grace on the basis of the redemption of Jesus Christ, the merit of His shed blood, and not on the basis of human merit or works (John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10; 1 Peter 1:18-19).

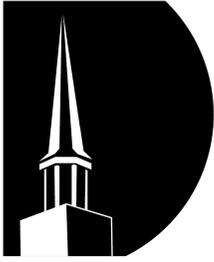
## **8. Regeneration**

We believe that regeneration is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which the divine nature and divine life are given (John 3:3-7; Titus 3:5). It is instantaneous and is accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the Word of God (John 5:24) when the repentant sinner, as enabled by the Holy Spirit, responds in faith to the divine provision of salvation. Genuine regeneration is manifested by fruits worthy of repentance as demonstrated in righteous attitudes and conduct. Good works will be its proper evidence and fruit (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Ephesians 2:10), and these good works will be experienced to the extent that the believer submits to the control of the Holy Spirit in his life through faithful obedience to the Word of God (Ephesians 5:17-21; Philippians 2:12b; Colossians 3:16; 2 Peter 1:4-10). This obedience causes the believer to be increasingly conformed to the image of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18). This conformity is completed in the believer's glorification at Christ's coming (Romans 8:17; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 3:2-3).

## **9. Election**

We believe that election is the act of God by which, before the foundation of the world, He chose in Christ those whom He graciously regenerates, saves, and sanctifies (Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:4-11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 Peter 1:1-2).

We believe that sovereign election does not contradict or negate the responsibility of man to repent and trust Christ as Savior and Lord (Ezekiel 18:23, 32; 33:11; John 3:18-19, 36; 5:40; Romans 9:22-23; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12; Revelation 22:17). Nevertheless, since sovereign grace includes the means of receiving the gift of salvation as well as the gift itself, sovereign election will result in what God determines. All whom the Father calls to Himself will come in faith and all who come in faith the Father will receive (John 6:37-40, 44; Acts 13:48; James 4:8).



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We believe that the unmerited favor that God grants to totally depraved sinners is not related to any initiative of their own part nor to God's anticipation of what they might do by their own will, but is solely of His sovereign grace and mercy (Ephesians 1:4-7; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Peter 1:2).

We believe that election should not be looked upon as based merely on abstract sovereignty. God is truly sovereign, but He exercises this sovereignty in harmony with His other attributes, especially His omniscience, justice, holiness, wisdom, grace, and love (Romans 9:11-16). This sovereignty will always exalt the will of God in a manner totally consistent with His character as revealed in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 11:25-28; 2 Timothy 1:9).

## 10. Justification

We believe that justification before God is an act of God (Romans 8:33) by which He declares righteous those who, through faith in Christ, repent of their sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 11:18; Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Isaiah 55:6-7) and confess Him as sovereign Lord (Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 2 Corinthians 4:5; Philippians 2:11). This righteousness is apart from any virtue or work of man (Romans 3:20; 4:6) and involves the imputation of our sins to Christ (Colossians 2:14; 1 Peter 2:24) and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us (1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21). By this means, God is enabled to "be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Romans 3:26).

## 11. Sanctification

We believe that every believer is sanctified (set apart) to God by justification and is therefore declared to be holy and is therefore identified as a saint. This sanctification is positional and instantaneous and should not be confused with progressive sanctification. This sanctification has to do with the believer's standing, not his present walk or condition (Acts 20:32; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 2:11; 3:1; 10:10, 14; 13:12; 1 Peter 1:2).

We believe that there is also by the work of the Holy Spirit a progressive sanctification by which the state of the believer is brought closer to the standing the believer positionally enjoys through justification. Through obedience to the Word of God and the empowering of the Holy Spirit, the believer is able to live a life of increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God, becoming more and more like our Lord Jesus Christ (John 17:17,19; Romans 6:1-22; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4; 5:23).

In this respect, we believe that every saved person is involved in a daily conflict—the new creation in Christ doing battle against the flesh—but adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The struggle nevertheless stays with the believer all through this earthly life and is never completely ended. All claims to the eradication of sin in this life are unscriptural. The struggle nevertheless stays with the believer all through his earthly life and is never completely ended, because



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eradication of sin in this life is not possible (Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24; Philippians 3:12; Colossians 3:9-10; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 1:8-9; 1 John 3:5-9).

## 12. Eternal Security

We believe that all the redeemed once saved are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever (John 5:24; 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Romans 5:9-10; 8:1, 31-39; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; Ephesians 4:30; Hebrews 7:25; 13:5; 1 Peter 1:5; Jude 24).

We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word, which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion for sinful living and carnality (Romans 6:15-22; 13:13-14; Galatians 5:13, 25-26; Titus 2:11-14).

## 13. Separation

We believe that separation from sin is clearly called for throughout the Old and New Testaments, and that the Scriptures clearly indicate that in the last days apostasy and worldliness will increase (2 Corinthians 6:14, 7:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-5).

We believe that out of deep gratitude for the undeserved grace of God granted to us, and because our glorious God is so worthy of our total consecration, all the saved should live in such a manner as to demonstrate our adoring love to God and so as not to bring reproach upon our Lord and Savior. We also teach that separation from all religious apostasy and worldly and sinful practices is commanded of us by God (Romans 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 2 Corinthians 6:14, 7:1; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11).

We believe that believers should be separated unto our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thessalonians 1:11-12; Hebrews 12:1-2) and we affirm that the Christian life is a life of obedient righteousness that reflects the teaching of the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:2-12) and a continual pursuit of holiness (Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Hebrews 12:14; Titus 2:11-14; 1 John 3:1-10).

## 14. The Church

We believe that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual Body, the church (1 Corinthians 12:12-13), the bride of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23-32; Revelation 19:7-8), of which Christ is the Head (Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; Colossians 1:18).

We believe that the formation of the church, the Body of Christ, began on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-21, 38-47) and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own at the rapture (1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).



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We believe that the church is thus a unique spiritual organism designed by Christ, made up of all born again believers in this present age (Ephesians 2:11-3:6). The church is distinct from Israel (1 Corinthians 10:32), a mystery not revealed until this age (Ephesians 3:1-6; 5:32).

We believe that the establishment and continuity of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures (Acts 14:23, 27; 20:17, 28; Galatians 1:2; Philippians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1) and that the members of the one spiritual Body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies (1 Corinthians 11:18-20; Hebrews 10:25).

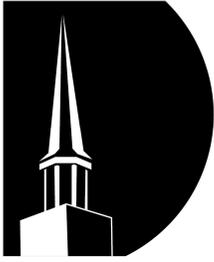
We believe that the one supreme authority for the church is Christ (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18) and that church leadership, gifts, order, discipline, and worship are all appointed through His sovereignty as found in the Scriptures. The biblically designated officers serving under Christ and over the assembly are elders (also called overseers, bishops, pastors, and pastor teachers; Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11) and deacons, both of whom must meet biblical qualifications (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-5). We believe that these leaders lead or rule as servants of Christ (1 Timothy 5:17-22) and have His authority in directing the church. The congregation is to submit to their leadership (Hebrews 13:7, 17).

We believe in the importance of discipleship (Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:2) and mutual accountability of all believers to each other as well as the need for discipline of sinning members of the congregation in accord with the standards of Scripture (Matthew 18:15-22; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Timothy 1:19-20; Titus 1:10-16).

We believe in the autonomy of the local church, free from any external authority or control, with the right of self-government and freedom from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations (Titus 1:5). We believe that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other for the presentation and propagation of the faith. Each local church, however, through its elders and their interpretation and application of Scripture, should be the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation. The church leadership will be responsible for all other matters of membership, policy, discipline, benevolence, and government as well (Acts 15:19-31; 20:28; 1 Corinthians 5:4-7, 13; 1 Peter 5:1-4).

We believe that the purpose of the church is to glorify God (Ephesians 3:21) by building itself up in the faith (Ephesians 4:13-16), by teaching the Word (2 Timothy 2:2, 15; 3:16-17), by Christian fellowship (Acts 2:47; Philippians 2:1-2; 1 John 1:3), by keeping the Lord's ordinances (Believer's Baptism and Lord's Supper) (Luke 22:19; Acts 2:38-42) and by advancing and communicating the gospel to the entire world (Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8; 2:42).

We believe in the calling of all saints to the work of service (1 Corinthians 15:58; Ephesians 4:12; Revelation 22:12).



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We believe in the need of the church to cooperate with God as He accomplishes His purpose in the world. To that end, He gives the church spiritual gifts. First, He gives men chosen for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:7-12), and He also gives unique and special spiritual abilities to each member of the Body of Christ (Romans 12:5-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-31; 1 Peter 4:10-11).

We believe that there were two kinds of gifts given the early church: miraculous gifts of divine revelation and healing, given temporarily in the apostolic era for the purpose of confirming the authenticity of the apostles' message (Hebrews 2:3-4; 2 Corinthians 12:12); and ministering gifts, given to equip believers for edifying one another. With the New Testament revelation now complete, Scripture becomes the sole test of the authenticity of a man's message, and confirming gifts of a miraculous nature are no longer necessary to validate a man or his message (1 Corinthians 13:8-12). Miraculous gifts can even be counterfeited by Satan so as to deceive even believers (1 Corinthians 13:13-14:12; Revelation 13:13-14). The only gifts in operation today are those nonrevelatory equipping gifts given for edification (Romans 12:6-8). We believe that no one possesses the gift of healing today but that God does hear and answer the prayer of faith and will answer in accordance with His own perfect will for the sick, suffering, and afflicted (Luke 18:1-6; John 5:7-9; 2 Corinthians 12:6-10; James 5:13-16; 1 John 5:14-15).

We believe that two ordinances have been committed to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:38-42). Christian baptism by immersion (Acts 8:36-39) is the solemn and beautiful testimony of a believer showing forth his faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, and his union with Him in death to sin and resurrection to a new life (Romans 6:1-11). It is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible Body of Christ (Acts 2:41-42).

We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration and proclamation of His death until He comes, and should be always preceded by solemn self-examination (1 Corinthians 11:28-32). We also believe that, whereas the elements of the Lord's Supper are only representative of the flesh and blood of Christ, the Lord's Supper is nevertheless an actual communion with the risen Christ who is present in a unique way, in fellowship with His people (1 Corinthians 10:16).

## 15. Gender Roles in Ministry

We value the worth and dignity of all persons, without distinction, as created in God's image (Genesis 1:26-27; 9:6). We affirm the priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:5, 9; Revelation 1:6) and the responsibility of every Christian woman and man to take an active role in edifying the church (Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 14:12; Ephesians 4:11-13). For that purpose, the Holy Spirit distributes ministry gifts to believers without distinction of any kind (Ephesians 4:7-13; 1 Corinthians 12; 1 Peter 4:10-11). That reality imposes the responsibility on every believer to fulfill ministry consistent with God's grace.



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We distinguish between ministry functions and church offices. While upholding the necessity of mutual respect and affirmation for all those subject to the Word of God (Ephesians 5:17–21), we understand that the biblical offices of pastor/elder/deacon in the early church were gender specific (1 Timothy 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9). Therefore, we maintain that it is consistent with that understanding of Scripture that those church offices should be limited to the male gender.

## 16. Sanctity of Human Life

We believe that each human carries within his or her being the eternal, holy breath of God, the Creator (Genesis 2:7; Acts 17:25). We are not only flesh and blood but image-bearers of the Living God (Genesis 9:6). Therefore, men, women and children created in the image of God should be respected, regardless of their age, ability or inability, race, creed, or religion. The earthly vessel that temporarily holds this priceless soul is the human body. The human body is sacred and should be held in honor and respect, not treated as an object and subjected to violence and death (Genesis 20:13; 21:12-16, 22-25; Leviticus 18:21). While being indwelt by the Holy Spirit is what sets us apart as Christians, the sacredness of human life is not based on accepting Jesus Christ as Savior. Every human life, Christian or not, is sacred and of inestimable value because each life is created in the Image of God (Genesis 1:26-27).

We believe in the sanctity of human life and that any form of abortion, embryonic stem cell research, euthanasia, or the withholding of reasonable care for the disabled or elderly is sinful and offensive to God.

We believe that the sanctity of human life extends to the child not yet born. Life is a gift from God. All human life, including life developing in the womb, is created by God in His image (Genesis 1:26-27; Job 31:15; Psalm 139:3-16; Isaiah 44:2, 24; Jeremiah 1:5) and is, therefore, to be nurtured, supported, and protected (Psalm 22:9). From the moment of conception, a child is a human being with all of the developing characteristics of human life (Luke 1:15); and this life is dependent on the mother for its continued development. Therefore, we believe that human life must be respected and protected from the moment of conception. We oppose induced abortion by any means when used for either personal convenience or population control. We realize that rare medical conditions exist wherein the mother or the unborn child, or both, could not survive the pregnancy, and we believe that termination of such a pregnancy should be made only after sound medical and Christian counseling.

## 17. Marriage & Sexuality

We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning: marriage sanctioned by God joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union as delineated in the Bible (Genesis 2:18, 21-24; Ephesians 5:22-33; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Corinthians 7:3-5; Proverbs 31:10-11).

We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married



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to each other (1 Corinthians 7:2-5). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman (Hebrews 13:4; Proverbs 5:18-20; 1 Corinthians 6:15-20; Matthew 5:27-28; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5).

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (Ephesians 5:3), such as adultery (Exodus 20:14; Leviticus 20:10; Proverbs 5:20, 6:20-29, 23:26-28); fornication (1 Corinthians 6:13, 18-19); homosexuality, transsexuality, or bisexual conduct (Leviticus 18:22; Romans 1:24-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10); bestiality (Leviticus 18:23); incest (Leviticus 18:6-18, 18:22); pornography (Colossians 3:5; Galatians 5:16, Romans 6:12, James 1:14-15); or any attempt to change one’s sex/gender physically and/or physiologically (Mark 10:6), is sinful and offensive to God (Psalm 139:13-16; Ephesians 4:22-24; Proverbs 28:13).

## 18. Creation

We believe the Biblical account (Genesis 1:1-2:3) as being a historical record of creation, and we believe that the universe with all that is in it was created by God, not produced by some lengthy process of evolution (Psalm 33:6, 9; John 1:1-3; Acts 4:24, 17:24; Hebrews 11:3; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11). We believe that God created everything in six 24-hour periods (Exodus 20:11; Hebrews 4:4). We believe in the “Young Earth” creationist explanation of the origins of the universe based on a literal interpretation of the Genesis creation narrative.

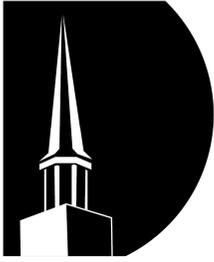
## 19. Holy Angels

We believe that angels are created beings and are, therefore, not to be worshiped. Although they are a higher order of creation than man, they are created to serve God and to worship Him (Luke 2:9-14; Hebrews 1:6-7, 14; 2:6-7; Revelation 5:11-14; 19:9-10; 22:8-9).

## 20. Fallen Angels

We believe that Satan is a created angel and the author of sin. He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19), by taking numerous angels with him in his fall (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 12:1-14), and by introducing sin into the human race by his temptation of Eve (Genesis 3:1-15).

We believe that Satan is the open and declared enemy of God and man (Isaiah 14:13-14; Matthew 4:1-11; Revelation 12:9-10); the prince of this world, who has been defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Romans 16:20); and that he shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10).



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## 21. Death

We believe that physical death involves no loss of our immaterial consciousness (Revelation 6:9-11), that the soul of the redeemed passes immediately into the presence of Christ (Luke 23:43; Philippians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 5:8), that there is a separation of soul and body (Philippians 1:21-24), and that, for the redeemed, such separation will continue until the rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17), which initiates the first resurrection (Revelation 20:4-6) when our soul and body will be reunited to be glorified forever with our Lord (Philippians 3:21; 1 Corinthians 15:35-44, 50-54). Until that time, the souls of the redeemed in Christ remain in joyful fellowship with our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:8).

We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life (John 6:39; Romans 8:10-11, 19-23; 2 Corinthians 4:14) and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Daniel 12:2; John 5:29; Revelation 20:13-15).

We believe that the souls of the unsaved at death are kept under punishment until the second resurrection (Luke 16:19-26; Revelation 20:13-15), when the soul and the resurrection body will be united (John 5:28-29). They will then appear at the Great White Throne judgment (Revelation 20:11-15) and will be cast into hell, the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41-46), cut off from the life of God forever (Daniel 12:2; Matthew 25:41-46; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

## 22. The Rapture of the Church

We believe in the personal, bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ before the seven year tribulation (1 Thessalonians 4:16; Titus 2:13) to translate His church from this earth (John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-5:11) and, between this event and His glorious return with His saints, to reward believers according to their works (1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

## 23. The Tribulation Period

We believe that immediately following the removal of the church from the earth (John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) the righteous judgments of God will be poured out upon an unbelieving world (Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 9:27; 12:1; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12; Revelation 16), and that the climax of these judgments will be the return of Christ in glory to the earth (Matthew 24:27-31; 25:31-46; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12). At that time the Old Testament and tribulation saints will be raised and the living will be judged (Daniel 12:2-3; Revelation 20:4-6). This period includes the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy (Daniel 9:24-27; Matthew 24:15-31; 25:31-46).



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## 24. The Second Coming and the Millennial Reign

We believe that, after the tribulation period, Christ will come to earth to occupy the throne of David (Matthew 25:31; Luke 1:31-33; Acts 1:10-11; 2:29-30) and establish His messianic kingdom for a thousand years on the earth (Revelation 20:1-7). During this time the resurrected saints will reign with Him over Israel and all the nations of the earth (Ezekiel 37:21-28; Daniel 7:17-22; Revelation 19:11-16). This reign will be preceded by the overthrow of the Antichrist and the False Prophet, and by the removal of Satan from the world (Daniel 7:17-27; Revelation 20:1-7).

We believe that the kingdom itself will be the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel (Isaiah 65:17-25; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Zechariah 8:1-17) to restore them to the land which they forfeited through their disobedience (Deuteronomy 28:15-68). The result of their disobedience was that Israel was temporarily set aside (Matthew 21:43; Romans 11:1-26) but will again be awakened through repentance to enter into the land of blessing (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:22-32; Romans 11:25-29).

We believe that this time of our Lord's reign will be characterized by harmony, justice, peace, righteousness, and long life (Isaiah 11; 65:17-25; Ezekiel 36:33-38), and will be brought to an end with the release of Satan (Revelation 20:7).

## 25. The Judgment of the Lost

We believe that following the release of Satan after the thousand year reign of Christ (Revelation 20:7), Satan will deceive the nations of the earth and gather them to battle against the saints and the beloved city, at which time Satan and his army will be devoured by fire from heaven (Revelation 20:9). Following this, Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10); whereupon, Christ, who is the Judge of all men (John 5:22), will resurrect and judge the great and the small at the Great White Throne judgment.

We believe that this resurrection of the unsaved dead to judgment will be a physical resurrection; whereupon, after receiving their judgment (Romans 14:10-13), they will be committed to an eternal conscious punishment in the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:11-15).

## 26. Eternity

We believe that after the closing of the millennium, the temporary release of Satan, and the judgment of unbelievers (2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 20:7-15), the saved will enter the eternal state of glory with God, after which the elements of this earth are to be dissolved (2 Peter 3:10) and replaced with a new earth wherein only righteousness dwells (Ephesians 5:5; Revelation 20:15, 21-22). Following this, the heavenly city will come down out of heaven (Revelation 21:2) and will be the dwelling place of the saints, where they will enjoy forever fellowship with God and one another (John 17:3; Revelation 21-22). Our Lord



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Jesus Christ, having fulfilled His redemptive mission, will then deliver up the kingdom to God the Father (1 Corinthians 15:24-28) so that in all spheres the triune God may reign forever and ever (1 Corinthians 15:28).

## **SECTION 4 – THE BIBLE AND PRAYER**

God has revealed Himself to humanity in many ways, one of the most important of which is the Bible, consisting of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments. God also desires in His grace that we communicate with Him. This is one of the greatest blessings provided to us as Christians. Not only do prayer and Bible study provide encouragement, strength, and growth in one’s personal relationship with God, but they also provide the guidance needed in order to better understand His will. Prayer and Bible study play a vital role in the life of the Christian, both as an individual and as part of the Body of Christ. God, through the Holy Spirit, uses prayer in conjunction with His Word, to reveal His Truth to His children, provide them with the discernment to understand it, and the faith to apply it. Therefore, we at Milan Baptist Church believe it is absolutely imperative that every aspect of both personal and corporate life be conducted prayerfully, in conformance with the Scriptures, and in full submission to the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.



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## ARTICLE 3 - OBJECT OF THE CHURCH

The object of this church shall be

1. Worship:

Elevating God's Kingdom by obedience to His Word and the sacrificial giving of our lives to His worship.

2. Fellowship - Koinonia:

The mutual sharing of and in each other's lives. This sharing involves three things:

- a. it includes all believers (Acts 2:44),
- b. it holds believers together by promoting unity (Acts 2:44), and
- c. it meets the needs of believers (Acts 2:45). It is the expression of genuine Christianity freely shared among the members of God's family.

3. Evangelism:

The presentation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world at home and abroad through an obedient and humble style, and the active communication of God's Word.

4. Prayer:

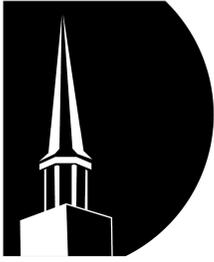
An intimate communication with God whereby we seek to understand His will for our lives. There is no sacred language or ritual which gets God's attention. Our all-knowing God responds to our entire lives, of which our prayers are merely a small part.

5. Edification:

The building up of the body of Christ by the teaching of and submission to the Word of God as our sole means of faith and practice. This includes the encouragement of one another to faith and good works.

6. Communion (Lord's Supper):

The remembering of the work of Christ in procuring our entire salvation through the breaking of His body to make us whole and the shedding of His blood to free us from the penalty and power of our sin.



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## ARTICLE 4 - MEMBERSHIP

### SECTION 1 - QUALIFICATIONS

Church membership consists of all such persons who have requested to be brought into membership and have met all of the following criteria:

1. Have confessed Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.
2. Have been baptized by immersion subsequent to their salvation. (Any exceptions must be approved by the Board of Deacons)
3. Have successfully completed the new members' course that includes the doctrine and constitution of the church.
4. Have been examined and approved by the pastor and the Board of Deacons as to their Christian experience and other conduct, as well as their agreement with all the doctrine in "Article 2 - Section 2 - Membership Doctrine" statement.

A potential new members list shall be presented to the congregation, so that they may bring before the Board of Deacons any knowledge of the new members that needs to be presented. At the earliest convenience, the new member(s) will be presented to the congregation for the right hand of fellowship.

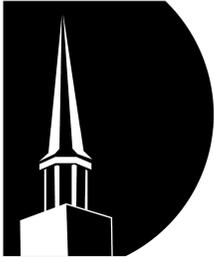
### SECTION 2 - DUTIES OF MEMBERS

Even though God saves each of us as an individual, He calls us also to be part of the Body of Christ. This universal body is made up of local church congregations, which in turn consist of each Believer coming together to fulfill the three-fold objective of the church:

1. Exaltation of God (Ephesians 1:4-6; 1 Peter 2:4-5,9)
2. Evangelization of the World (Matthew 28:18-20)
3. Edification of the Body (Ephesians 4:11-16; Colossians 1:28-29)

Exaltation, evangelism, and edification are accomplished as each person yields to the power of the Holy Spirit in his or her life in order to live as:

1. A Temple of the Holy Spirit as evidenced in:
  - a. Love and devotion to God
  - b. Prayer and worship



# Milan Baptist Church

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- c. Obedience and holiness
- d. Transformation into the likeness of Christ
- e. Yearning for growth through regular study of the Word
- 2. A Servant to the Lost as evidenced in:
  - a. Living as salt and light
  - b. Loving them in word and deed
  - c. Presenting the gospel of truth
- 3. A Servant of the Body as evidenced in:
  - a. Regular participation in the corporate life of the church
  - b. Faithful exercising of one’s spiritual gifts
  - c. Promoting unity
  - d. Building up and encouraging others
  - e. Stimulating to love and good works
  - f. Forbearance and forgiveness
  - g. Sacrificial and unconditional love

### Voting:

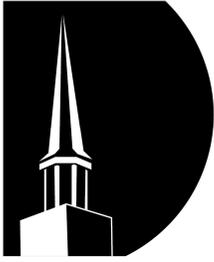
All members in fellowship and agreement with us, having attained the age of sixteen, shall be entitled to a vote at all regular church business meetings in all matters that concern the work. Concerning legal matters, however, only members who have reached their legal age are entitled to vote. Absentee ballots may be requested from the Church Clerk.

Qualifications for all positions of service within the Milan Baptist Church:

Only active members of the Milan Baptist Church in good standing who are in agreement with all the doctrine in "Article 2 - Section 2 - Membership Doctrine" statement and the more detailed "Article 2 – Section 3 – Teaching & Preaching Belief Statement" shall be allowed to fill any Officer, any Ministry Leadership positions, or any Teaching positions.

A non-member may be considered for all other positions of service after due consideration of the Board of Deacons.

All preaching and teaching shall be in agreement with all the doctrine in "Article 2 - Section 2 - Membership Doctrine" statement and the more detailed "Article 2 – Section 3 – Teaching & Preaching Belief Statement".



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## SECTION 3 – DISCIPLINE

The New Testament clearly gives what disciplinary action is to be taken by local churches under certain circumstances. Sin in any form, whether moral or doctrinal in character, is not to be allowed to continue in any local church. Some offenses are to be dealt with by the church; others are to be brought before the church only if a settlement cannot be made otherwise. It is well to keep in mind that local churches are not to make the rules for discipline but to act on scriptural instructions in behalf of Christ, the Head of the Church. When acting according to the Scriptures, the local church has the authority of Christ and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

The purpose of discipline in a New Testament church is to preserve unity among the assembly and restore sinning believers to fellowship with God and other believers. Revenge for wrongdoing is never to be the motive for discipline, and all discipline is to be administered in love. Note that this discipline is different from the discipline of the pastor and deacons; the particulars of which are laid out in Article 8.

The scriptural basis for church discipline is found in: (Matthew 18:15-20)

### Steps:

1. If an individual feels he or she has been wronged by someone else or feels that another person is engaging in sinful behavior, the person should be approached in private and every attempt should be made to bring about repentance and reconciliation. If the matter cannot be resolved, the confronting individual will proceed to step 2.
2. The confronting individual will meet with the other person in the presence of one or two witnesses. They will then work together to attempt to bring about repentance and reconciliation. If the matter cannot be resolved, the confronting individual will proceed to step 3.
3. The confronting individual with the witnesses will bring the matter to the church body. The Board of Deacons, as the overseers of the local church, would then give the guilty party an opportunity to repent and make amends for his or her wrong. If the guilty party refuses to repent and seek reconciliation, then the final official step of discipline must be enforced. By this act of defiance, the guilty party is the one who brings about the outcome of the process. Therefore no majority vote is taken. At this point, the deacons will officially, before the congregation, require the guilty party to remove him or herself from fellowship with the local congregation until such time as he or she understands the need for repentance and reconciliation and is willing to take the necessary steps to do so.



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Please note that at every point in the entire discipline process, regardless of the outcome, the leaders and congregation will make every effort to work with the guilty party to ensure restoration and long-term spiritual growth in the area in question. There may be times that an accusation brought against someone is of a serious enough nature that it may be necessary for the church leadership to remove the accused from certain leadership positions or ministries until the accusation can be fully investigated. If the accusation is found to be true and the individual repents, it may still be necessary for that person to refrain from participating in certain ministries or leadership positions either temporarily or permanently. The Board of Deacons will ultimately be responsible for deciding whether this is necessary.

If the guilty party seeks repentance and reconciliation, the entire congregation (including the injured parties) shall follow the biblical example to accept the person back with love and forgiveness. The Scripture is always the source of instruction and authority for church discipline.

## SECTION 4 – TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

**By transfer** – Members in good and regular standing who desire transfer to another church should request in writing to the Board of Deacons that a letter of membership transfer be mailed to the church they desire to join.

**By request** – Members who desire to have their name removed from membership should request removal in writing to the Board of Deacons.

**By exclusion** – Any member who clearly manifests disinterest, or inactivity, or who chooses to create disharmony over any doctrine in either the "Article 2 - Section 2 - Membership Doctrine" statement or the more detailed "Article 2 – Section 3 – Teaching & Preaching Belief Statement" shall be admonished by the deacons of the church. If after due admonition, disinterest and inactivity continue, his/her name shall be submitted for termination to the deacons at a regularly convened meeting. With their recommendation of exclusion and the individual notified in writing, the deacons will instruct the Church Clerk to remove them from the membership list. The member may appeal to the deacons before final action is taken, if he/she so desires.



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## ARTICLE 5 - OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

### SECTION 1 - NUMBER OF OFFICERS AND TERMS OF SERVICE

The church officers shall be Pastor(s), Deacons (not to exceed six), Trustees, (not to exceed six), Clerk, Church Treasurer, Missionary Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurer. All, but hired pastoral staff, must be active members in good standing for at least one year. All must meet all other qualifications of the respective offices as defined in this document.

#### **Election of Officers:**

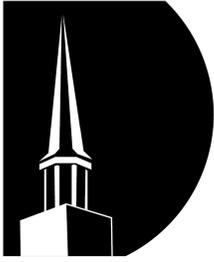
The election of officers of the Church shall take place at the Annual Business Meeting of the Church, all elections being determined by the majority of votes cast.

- Deacons: 3 years
- Trustees: 3 years
- Church Treasurer: 3 years
- Missionary Treasurer: 3 years
- Assistant Treasurer: 3 years
- Clerk: 3 years

### SECTION 2 - QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES OF OFFICERS

#### **THE CHIEF SHEPHERD:**

Jesus Christ, the one and only Son of God, is the sole head of the Milan Baptist Church. He is described in God's Word as the Chief Cornerstone, the Chief Shepherd, and the Head of the Church. Therefore Milan Baptist Church belongs without reservation to Him and Him alone. Christ ministers to the church through the enlightenment and empowerment of His Spirit. His immediate purpose is to empower the church to reach the lost with the ultimate objective of presenting itself to Him glorious, without any spot or wrinkle that would detract from Heaven's beauty. (Mark 12:10; Ephesians 1:22-23; Ephesians 2:20; Ephesians 5:23-27; Colossians 1:18; Acts 20:28).



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## UNDER-SHEPHERDS:

In order to fulfill His purposes for His church, Christ has placed men into leadership roles as under-shepherds. These men are not only called by Him, but are also ultimately accountable to Him. At Milan Baptist Church, the group of under-shepherds consists of the pastor (and all associate pastors) and the deacons. These under-shepherds work as a team overseeing the spiritual ministries of the church for the purpose of fulfilling the Ephesians 4:11-13 mandate of “equipping the saints for the work of service” for the purpose of promoting Christ-like unity and maturity within the body so that the church can reach the lost by being salt and light in a fallen world. The pastor(s) and deacons are accountable to one another as well as to the general congregation.

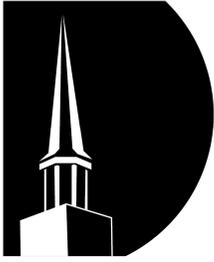
The pastoral staff at Milan Baptist Church will consist of a senior pastor and all associate pastors. The senior pastor and the associates will work together as a team along with the deacons in overseeing the spiritual ministries of the church. Because each Christian has been given different talents and spiritual gifts the pastoral staff and the deacons will work together under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to focus each member of the team on those areas of ministry that would be most beneficial for the furtherance of the growth of the local body. The senior pastor and the chairman of the deacons will maintain coordination of the efforts of the pastoral staff and the deacons.

The senior pastor and all associates shall be called to the pastorate for an indefinite period. (See Article 7 for the Calling of pastor(s), and Article 8 for the Discipline of Pastors and Deacons).

## QUALIFICATIONS FOR PASTORS AND DEACONS:

In order to equip the saints, the pastors and the deacons must be men who are above reproach with regard to the qualities of character and maturity as laid out in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-4. Being above reproach (blameless) does not refer to sinless perfection because in that case no human being would ever qualify for these positions. Instead, it can be defined as God’s requirement that His under-shepherds maintain in good conscience a reputation (both in the church and in the community) for godliness and spiritual maturity. They are to provide a consistent example of holiness so that their lifestyles will not lead people astray or bring the ministry of the local church into disrepute. The above mentioned passages provide us with the characteristics of such a lifestyle. There is overlap within the lists so certain characteristics will be combined as appropriate:

1. Husband of one wife:
  - a. The literal Greek interpretation of this term is a “one-woman man”. This has been interpreted a number of ways and deserves therefore some clarification.
  - b. It is NOT solely a reference to polygamy. This is forbidden to all men.



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c. It is NOT a requirement that a pastor or deacon be married rather than single. If it were referring to this, Paul would have worded it “the husband of a wife”.

d. It is NOT a requirement that a widower never remarry because Romans 7:1-6 makes it clear that the bonds of the marriage union end at the death of one of the mates.

e. It is the requirement that a pastor or deacon has never been divorced. The only two exceptions are if the wife was guilty of a pattern of sexual infidelity (Matthew 5:32) or was an unbeliever who deserted him (1 Corinthians 7:15). We take this view of “husband of one wife” because of the verses referenced above and for two additional reasons:

i. God holds the marital relationship to be unique and for life (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4-9) and has stated that He hates divorce (Malachi 2:16). If God’s leaders are to lead the church by example, it is important that they demonstrate they hold marriage in that same high regard. God also makes it clear in the qualification passages that a man’s ability to lead the church is evidenced in his ability to lead his family. Divorce would call these abilities into question, compromise his credibility, and violate the overriding requirement that such a man be above reproach.

ii. God has made the marriage a visible symbol of the relationship between Christ and His church (Ephesians 5:22-23). The Bible is clear that the leaders are to be Christ’s under-shepherds. They are therefore visible examples in their relationship with the church of how, in turn, Christ relates to His church. Here again divorce would bring the ministry into disrepute and degrade the church’s confidence in God’s ministry to His people.

f. It is faithfulness sexually and emotionally to one’s wife. He is to be devoted to his wife and fulfill the requirements of loving his wife as Christ loved the church (Ephesians 5:25-30).

2. Be Temperate – The Greek means “alert, vigilant, and clear-headed, exhibits self-control in his desires, passions, and sensual appetites.” Such a man will be on his guard to protect the truth of the gospel and the spiritual well being of the church. He will evaluate his own life to ensure he remains able to do so.
3. Be Prudent – The Greek means “sensible and serious-minded”. He views himself and the world through God’s eyes. This view dominates how he prioritizes his life and ministry and causes him to discipline his mind. He is cautious, thoughtful, and earnest.
4. Be Self-Controlled – The prudent man will discipline his mind and follow this with a disciplined and orderly life. This will help him to bring order to his ministries and the church as a whole.
5. Be Respectable – The Greek means “orderly and honorable”. He has earned the respect of Christians and non-Christians alike because he demonstrates a love for what is good and by showing evidence of the fruits of the Holy Spirit in his life.
6. Be Hospitable – The Greek means literally “to love strangers”. The home of such a man will be open to others so that he can demonstrate the love of Christ by meeting their needs.
7. Be Able To Teach – He must have the spiritual gift of teaching. In addition, he must be faithful in studying and understanding the Scriptures and have the courage to faithfully and effectively teach and protect the doctrines taught within them.



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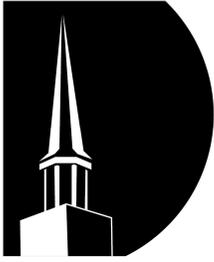
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8. Not Addicted To Wine – Such a man will not allow alcohol or other intoxicating substances to control his life or impair his judgment. He will also be careful to protect his reputation in this area and be sensitive to the weaknesses and spiritual immaturity of others.
9. Not Pugnacious – The Greek means literally “not a striker”. He should not react to stress, difficulties, or conflict with aggressive and hurtful words or actions.
10. Be Gentle – Instead of being pugnacious, he should be considerate, compassionate, and quick to forgive.
11. Be Uncontentious. Not Quick-Tempered Or Self-Willed – He will be slow to anger and forbearing. He will promote peace within the church. He will not be quarrelsome and will not seek his own way without regard to others.
12. Be Free From The Love Of Money And Sordid Gain – He should not be in the ministry in order to make money. He has honesty and integrity. Money (or the lack thereof) should not have a hold of his life and attitudes, as would be evidenced by greed, stinginess, financial ambition, or a willingness to resort to immoral means in order to make money. He sees himself as a steward of the material things that God has blessed him with and uses them accordingly.
13. Be Just – Derives from the Greek word translated as “righteous”. He will use the divine standards of Scripture in his dealings with people. He will be fair and even-handed.
14. Be Devout – The Greek carries the idea of holiness. He will make every effort to live a life that is an example of holiness and total devotion to Christ. He will love and pursue what is good rather than what is evil.
15. Manage His Children And Household Well – He will be the spiritual leader of his home and provide a Godly and loving environment for his family. His wife (if applicable) will be a believer, who evidences the fruits of the Holy Spirit and is active in the ministries and fellowship of the local church. His children (if applicable) will be raised in the ways of the Lord, being obedient to their Lord, parents, and other Godly leadership. The children will have also made decisions for the Lord at such an age that they are capable of feeling and following His call. In cases where a potential deacon has young children who have not yet accepted Christ or believing children who have momentarily stumbled, the under-shepherds will see that the children are progressing toward an obedient yielding to Him and will earnestly and prayerfully seek guidance from the Holy Spirit for the calling of that potential deacon.
16. Not A New Convert – The character traits listed above require time to develop. Placing a new Christian in such positions of leadership leaves him open to both discouragement and conceit, which would in time destroy his ability to lead.



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## RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PASTORS:

### All Pastors

1. Preach and teach
2. Regularly worship and participate in ~~the~~ ministries with the rest of the body and work with the worship ministry team in organizing the worship services.
3. Participate as an ex-officio member of the Board of Deacons. For the establishment of their annual compensation package(s), the pastor(s) will excuse themselves from its final determination.
4. Supervise his specific ministry staff and oversee the leadership of the church ministries for which he is responsible. The senior pastor will perform this in cooperation with the Board of Deacons; associate pastor(s) will perform this in cooperation with the senior pastor.
5. Oversee
  - a. Understanding of the status and progress of the ministries
  - b. Encouragement and recommendations for personal growth of ministry leaders as well as the ministry itself
  - c. Discipleship as needed
  - d. Resource in matter of doctrine
  - e. Counseling
6. Conduct general pastoral care, including
  - a. Performing sacral duties
  - b. Short-term counseling
  - c. Periodic visitation of the church membership
  - d. Hospital visitation
7. In conjunction with the Board of Deacons, protect the Milan Baptist Church Constitution and the doctrinal purity of the church by maintaining the Bible as the foundation of truth upon which the church will stand.
8. Coordinate discipleship efforts within the church to encourage individual growth in areas of personal spiritual maturity and outreach into the community. These efforts will include both personal example and teaching.
9. Participate, as appropriate, in outside ministry or community opportunities. For the senior pastor as deemed appropriate by the Board of Deacons. For associate pastor(s) as deemed appropriate by the senior pastor. These opportunities should not be in conflict with the pastor's responsibilities or the Church doctrinal statement.
10. Participate in and encourage the growth of domestic and overseas missions.
11. Maintain personal and professional development, including
  - a. Bible study and prayer
  - b. Continued education
  - c. Networking with other pastors



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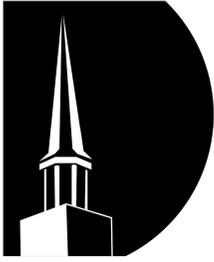
- d. Conference attendance

### Additional Senior Pastor Responsibilities

1. Supervise the staff and oversee, in cooperation with the deacons, the leadership of various ministries of the church. The pastoral portion of oversight will consist of:
  - a. Understanding of the status and progress of the ministries
  - b. Encouragement and recommendations for personal growth of ministry leaders as well as growth of the ministry itself
  - c. Discipleship as needed
  - d. Resource in matter of doctrine
  - e. Counseling
2. Together with the deacons, prepare and examine Christians who wish to become members of the local body.
3. Preside over the church board.
4. Preside over the Annual Business Meeting.
5. Have signature authority for expenditures by the ministries of the church as defined in Article 9.
6. Participate in mutual ministry with the deacons, including
  - a. Meeting regularly with the deacons to understand the status and progress of their ministries
  - b. Encouragement
  - c. Being a resource for ministry support
  - d. Conflict resolution
  - e. Accountability

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEACONS:**

1. Oversee and coordinate the leadership of the various ministries of the church. This will be done in cooperation with the pastoral staff. The portion of oversight performed by the deacons will consist of:
  - a. Understanding of the status and progress of the ministries
  - b. Encouragement and recommendation for personal growth of ministry leaders as well as growth of the ministry itself
  - c. Discipleship as needed
  - d. Resource in matters of doctrine
  - e. Counseling
  - f. Establishment of budgetary requirements for ministries
  - g. Discipline and conflict resolution of church leadership according to article 8.
  - h. Establishment of direction for ministry direction and strategy for the church
  - i. Review and approve proposed ministry leaders who are not church members



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2. Church conflict resolution and discipline
3. Mutual ministry with the pastoral staff:
  - a. Meet regularly with the pastoral staff to understand the status and progress of their ministries
  - b. Encouragement
  - c. Resource for ministry support
  - d. Conflict resolution
  - e. Accountability.
4. Preach and teach as needed.
5. Counseling.
6. Visitation (home and hospital).
7. Discipleship.
8. Member of the pulpit committee.
9. Setup and serving of the Lord's Supper.
10. Attend all meeting of the Board of Deacons, Church Board, and the Annual Business Meeting.
11. Review and approve all requests for missionary support.
12. Prepare the annual budget with the support of the leaders of the church ministries and present the budget at the Annual Business meeting for congregational approval.
13. Establish the compensation packages for the paid church staff with the exclusion of the staff under the Board of Trustees (including pastoral). The pastoral staff will excuse themselves from final determination of the pastoral compensation packages.
14. Call, appoint, and direct the activities of the constitutional review committee.
15. Examine and approve candidates for church membership.
16. The membership list will be revised and approved by the Board of Deacons on an annual basis.
17. In conjunction with the pastoral staff, they shall protect the Milan Baptist Church Constitution and the doctrinal purity of the church by maintaining the Bible as the foundation of truth upon which the church will stand.
18. Participate in the Deacon Caring Ministry.
19. Coordinate discipleship efforts within the church to encourage individual growth in areas of personal spiritual maturity and outreach into the community. These efforts will include both personal example and teaching.
20. Regularly worship and participate in the ministries with the local church body.
21. Personal spiritual development through Bible study and prayer.
22. Chairman has signature authority for expenditures by the ministries of the church as defined in Article 9.
23. The Board of Deacons will consist of all pastoral staff, a chairman (who will not be a member of the pastoral staff), a secretary, and no more than four additional deacons. The chairman and secretary must be currently sitting elected deacons, and elected annually by the current members.



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- 24. One more than half of the currently sitting Board of Deacons including the pastoral staff will constitute a quorum for decision-making purposes.
- 25. Because of the need to maintain unity all decisions must be unanimous.
- 26. In cases of parliamentary differences, or on points not otherwise provided for in this Constitution, the Board of Deacons shall be governed by ***Robert's Rules of Order***.

## TRUSTEES:

He or she shall be called to this office for the care and maintenance of all property owned by the Church.

## QUALIFICATIONS

- 1. Be an active member in good standing.
- 2. Holding the Word of God in a pure conscience.
- 3. Serious minded concerning spiritual things.
- 4. Honest and truthful.
- 5. Be sober not drunk.
- 6. Have not the love of money in their heart.
- 7. Hold confidences.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1. Perform duties of a member.
- 2. Attend all Board of Trustees meetings and all relevant Church meetings.
- 3. All trustees are members of the Board of Trustees and annually elect a chairman and a secretary. The chairman and secretary must be currently sitting elected trustees. The Board of Trustees shall not exceed six members.
- 4. Account for, care for, and maintain all Church properties which consist of and are not limited to church buildings and grounds, furnishings, equipment, vehicles, insurance, and hiring and firing custodians.
- 5. Ordering cleaning and maintenance supplies.
- 6. Responsible for providing a budget in regards to the care and maintenance of church property and submitting it to the deacons in preparation for the Annual Business Meeting.
- 7. In cases of parliamentary differences, or on points not otherwise provided for in this Constitution, the Board of Trustees shall be governed by ***Robert's Rules of Order***.



# Milan Baptist Church

31 Ferman Street, P.O. Box 147  
Milan, Michigan 48160

Office: 734-439-8180  
Fax: 734-508-6026

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## CLERK:

### QUALIFICATIONS

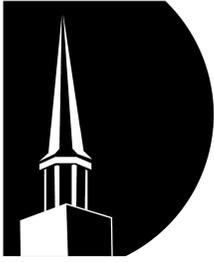
1. Honest—truthful.
2. A believer who has shown spiritual maturity in the course of their life.
3. Must be of legal age (18) or older.
4. An active member of Milan Baptist Church who is in full agreement with its doctrinal statement.
5. A person who has evidenced leadership abilities and who works well with others.
6. Must have the ability to keep business matters confidential.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Attend all Church Board meetings (regular and special), all business meetings including the Annual Meeting; and keep a complete record of all those meetings of the church and their proceedings, which shall be read for approval at the next business meeting of the church. Minutes should be compiled and available within 30 days unless otherwise specified.
2. He, or she, shall keep a register of names of members with the dates of admission, transfer, death, and record of baptisms.
3. The Clerk shall issue letters of dismissal of members as directed by the Board of Deacons.
4. The Clerk shall send and receive all letters of transfer of membership as directed by the Board of Deacons.
5. Provide Absentee Ballots for all business meetings.
6. The Clerk will also have knowledge of where the historical documents of the church are kept. Access to the historical documents should be obtained through the Clerk.
7. Will use computers and computer software(s) to handle the various aspects of the Clerk's responsibilities.

## CHURCH TREASURER:

The Church Treasurer shall receive and keep account of all monies received, such as Sunday offerings and special offerings, except when the Church appoints a committee of one or more for special offerings. He, or she, shall give a detailed account of all receipts and expenditures at the Annual Business Meeting of the Church. The Church Treasurer shall have authority to sign checks for approved expenditures on behalf of Milan Baptist Church.



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## MISSIONARY TREASURER:

The Missionary Treasurer shall receive and keep account of all missionary monies, and shall disburse the monies upon the order of the Board of Deacons. The recommendations concerning new missionaries and annual support shall be presented to the Church for approval. The Missionary Treasurer shall disburse approved budgeted monies. The Missionary Treasurer shall have authority to sign checks for approved expenditures on behalf of Milan Baptist Church.

## ASSISTANT TREASURER:

Will assist the other treasurers in all their duties. The Assistant Treasurer shall have authority to sign checks for approved expenditures on behalf of Milan Baptist Church.

## SECTION 3 – THE FINANCIAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Financial Review Committee will consist of a minimum of (2) two members who cannot be current treasurers. The Review Committee shall examine all financial records of the church. The Board of Deacons shall appoint the committee 16 weeks before the Annual Business Meeting. The financial records shall be reviewed and the results reported at the Annual Business Meeting.

## SECTION 4 - THE CHURCH NOMINATING COMMITTEE

### 1. Members

The Church Nominating Committee (known as “the Committee” throughout this section) consists of three Church Board members (at least one Deacon and one Trustee, plus a third member), three non-Board members (from the Church membership), and the Pastor (non-voting member). The Committee members are elected by the Church membership at the Annual Business Meeting. The Committee members serve a one year term and shall not serve more than two consecutive terms without at least a one year break. A Committee member must have been a church member, in good standing, for at least one year.



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## 2. Electing The Nominating Committee

At the Annual Business Meeting:

- a. After the new Church Board is established, the Board members are listed, excluding those that will be up for re-nomination the following year. The exclusions are to avoid any conflict of interest in having a member up for renewal and sitting on the committee that would decide if they should be considered for re-nomination.
- b. An exclusion list of the current Committee members that have served two consecutive terms must also be listed.
- c. There will be a call for nominations from the general membership of at least six names.
- d. The Committee members will then be chosen by ballot.

## 3. The Process

The process by which the Committee will prepare and present the nominations for the Annual Business Meeting is as follows:

- a. At least 16 weeks prior to the Annual Business Meeting, the Committee will be notified to convene by the pastor. The pastor will provide instructions to the Committee on this process, the qualifications of the positions, what positions will be open, and who is eligible for re-nomination. The congregation will be informed that the Committee has started the process.
- b. In cases of parliamentary differences, or on points not otherwise provided for in this Constitution, the Committee shall be governed by ***Robert's Rules of Order***.
- c. The congregation has 3 weeks to provide the Committee any recommendations of members to be considered for Board positions.
- d. The Committee will post their preliminary nomination list no less than 8 weeks prior to the Annual Business Meeting.
- e. The congregation has 2 weeks to provide the Committee, in writing, any feedback on those being nominated. The feedback will be prayerfully taken into consideration as the Committee prepares the final nomination list.
- f. The Committee will post a final nomination list no less than 3 weeks prior to the Annual Business Meeting. The Clerk will provide, and make available, absentee ballots.

In the event of an unexpected vacancy during the year, the Board of Deacons and pastor will decide if the position is to be filled. If it is decided to fill the position, the same steps would be used as those listed above for the Annual Business Meeting. But the timeframes stated in steps "a" through "d" might vary at the discretion of the Board of Deacons and pastor.



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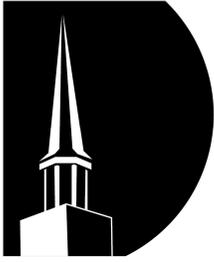
**SUBJECT: Constitution (Adopted: November 17, 2003)**

## SECTION 5 – CHURCH BOARD

Membership of the Church Board shall consist of Deacons, Trustees, Church Treasurer, Missionary Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Clerk, and Pastor(s)

The Church Board serves as a forum for ministry coordination within the body so that resources God has entrusted to the Church can be used most effectively for His purposes. The informational meetings are to be a time of idea and plan sharing between ministries. In cases of parliamentary differences, or on points not otherwise provided for in this Constitution, the Church Board shall be governed by **Robert's Rules of Order**. Any issues requiring decision as a result of a Church Board Meeting shall be resolved by the deacons through direct involvement or delegation.

The Church Board shall meet bimonthly or more frequently by special meeting as called by the deacons. Any ministry wishing to discuss coordination outside a normal bimonthly meeting may organize a meeting with the other pertinent ministries or may contact the deacons to schedule a special meeting of the full board.



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## ARTICLE 6 - MEETINGS

### SECTION 1 - SERVICES

One of the central activities of the church is regular fellowship and worship. This is in accordance with Hebrews 10:25 in order to draw us closer to one another and to God. Therefore regular worship services and additional fellowship opportunities will take place and congregational participation will be encouraged.

### SECTION 2 – THE LORD’S SUPPER

The Lord’s Supper shall be held the first Lord’s Day of each month unless otherwise specified.

### SECTION 3 - CONGREGATIONAL BUSINESS MEETING

A meeting may be called by the pastor, deacons, or trustees. A meeting may also be called, upon a written application signed by twenty members of the Church, specifying the object of the meeting. Notice of the meeting shall be read from the pulpit of the Lord’s Day at least two weeks prior to the meeting. The quorum will consist of 40 percent of the members list as defined by the Board of Deacons. In cases of parliamentary differences, or on points not otherwise provided for in this Constitution, the Congregational Business Meeting shall be governed by *Robert's Rules of Order*.

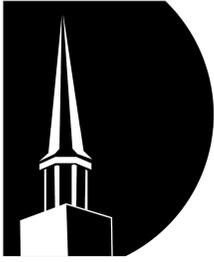
### SECTION 4 – ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

The purpose of the meeting is to conduct church business and fulfill State of Michigan incorporation requirements. Agenda items are to elect officers, approve and/or amend the budget, and inform the congregation of the business of the church.

Annually the Pastoral Staff, Officers, Teachers, and Ministry Leaders will publicly affirm their agreement and support of all the doctrine in "Article 2 - Section 2 - Membership Doctrine" statement and the more detailed "Article 2 – Section 3 – Teaching & Preaching Belief Statement".

The Annual Business Meeting will be held in June ; or as specified by the deacons if circumstances dictate a variance.

In cases of parliamentary differences, or on points not otherwise provided for in this Constitution, the Annual Business Meeting shall be governed by *Robert's Rules of Order*.



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## ARTICLE 7 - CALLING OF PASTORS

### SECTION 1 – CALLING

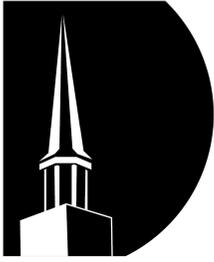
In the event of death, resignation, or dismissal of the pastor, the deacons will be the Pulpit Committee to contact suitable pastoral candidates and arrange for them to minister at one or more occasions within the church. The church membership will vote upon the candidate recommended by the Pulpit Committee. A three-quarters majority of the ballots cast is required to extend a call. Prior to the vote, the Pulpit Committee will report to the members concerning the testimony, qualifications, experiences, etc., of the candidates. Once chosen, and on the start date of his position, the pastor will remain until death or other severance of the pastoral relationship, and will not be voted upon on an annual or other periodical basis.

### SECTION 2 – PASTOR’S SALARY

The pastor’s monetary and other supplemental compensation will be determined and approved by the Board of Deacons, and presented to the church for approval.

### SECTION 3 - MEMBERSHIP

The senior pastor and any Associate pastors, along with their respective wives, shall be extended the privileges of membership upon the start date of their position. If the senior pastor or any associate pastors leave their position, the deacons will make the decision as to whether the pastor, along with his wife, should be removed from membership. If their decision is to have them removed, the deacons will notify them in writing, and instruct the Church Clerk to remove them from the membership list. The pastor and his wife may appeal to the deacons before final action is taken, if they so desire.



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## ARTICLE 8 – DISCIPLINE OF PASTORS AND DEACONS

Discipline and dismissal of a pastor or deacon will follow the Scriptural pattern for discipline as laid out in Matthew 18:15-20. As is the case for all Christians, the purpose of this process is to restore the individual to fellowship and effective ministry. As will be seen, the two processes do differ from one another because the purpose of the pastor/deacon discipline process is to evaluate fitness to hold a position of leadership within the local body. Under this constitution, the pastoral staff and deacons are to hold one another accountable in the fulfillment of their ministries. This mutual accountability will encompass both the qualifications and the responsibilities as laid out in this constitution. Therefore, the primary responsibility for initiating discipline and dismissal of a pastor or deacon will lie with this group of leaders.

If the matter is not of a nature that would potentially disqualify the pastor or deacon from further ministry in an official capacity and if he repents and agrees to work toward resolution of the matter, it will be considered resolved. Please note that at every point in the process, regardless of the outcome, the leaders involved in resolving the matter with the pastor or deacon will also make every effort to work with him to ensure restoration and long-term spiritual growth in the area in question.

### Steps:

1. If it is felt by an individual that a pastor or deacon has failed to fulfill the Biblical standards for pastoral ministry, that individual will meet privately with him. If the matter is of a nature that would potentially disqualify him from further ministry in an official capacity or if he is still unrepentant, the confronting individual will proceed to step 2.
2. The matter will be brought to the chairman of the Board of Deacons for prayerful consideration. If the leader in question is the chairman, the senior pastor will be approached. The chairman (or senior pastor as needed) will decide whether to involve another member of the board at this point. These men will then accompany the individual who brought the complaint and meet with the pastor or deacon in question. If the matter is of a nature that would potentially disqualify him from further ministry in an official capacity or if he is still unrepentant, these men will proceed to step 3.
3. The chairman of the Board of Deacons (or the senior pastor as needed) will present the matter to the entire Board of Deacons for prayerful consideration. The Board of Deacons will then meet with the pastor or deacon in question. If the Board of Deacons determines that the matter is of a nature that would definitely disqualify him from further ministry in an official capacity or if he is still unrepentant, the Board of Deacons will proceed to step 4.



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4. The chairman of the Board of Deacons (or senior pastor as needed) will present the matter to the congregation for their prayerful consideration. The standard process for calling a congregational meeting will be followed. The Board of Deacons will review the case with the congregation. If the Board of Deacons had previously determined that the matter is of a nature that would definitely disqualify him from further ministry in an official capacity or if he is still unrepentant, the Board of Deacons will call for his dismissal from his position by the congregation. Seventy-five percent of the votes cast must be in favor of dismissal in order to remove a pastor or deacon.



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## ARTICLE 9 - DISBURSEMENTS AND VOTING ON MONEY MATTERS

### SECTION 1 – DISBURSEMENTS

The Pastor(s), Chairman of the Board of Trustees, or Chairman of the Board of Deacons are to initial each invoice with the exception of the utility bills, based on the respective budget, for payment or issue requisitions for checks. The treasurers are to be given a slip to identify each item and the budget line item from which it is to be drawn. All expenditures are to be limited to \$1,000 for any one project to be expensed from the deacon budget or \$2,000 from projects to be expensed from the trustee budget unless otherwise approved by the Board of Deacons.

### SECTION 2 - VOTING ON MONEY MATTERS

The Chairman of the Deacons shall approve all money matters up to \$1,000 allowed for any one project. The exception is that the chairman of the trustees may approve money matters up to \$2,000 pertaining to their responsibilities. The Board of Deacons are to authorize any funds above these amounts and up to \$10,000. Any proposed expenditure above \$10,000 and not previously approved as part of the annual budget must be presented to the church membership for approval by simple majority of ballots cast.



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## ARTICLE 10- HONORARY POSITIONS

Any and all honorary positions bestowed on individuals by the church after inception of current constitution shall be of a non-voting position. Any honorary position can not hold a chairmanship of any board. Any honorary position will be above and beyond the total number of normal elected positions of any board.



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## ARTICLE 11 – DISSOLVING CORPORATION

Prior to any decision to dissolve this corporation known as Milan Baptist Church, the congregation will submit to a Christian arbitration organization in order to make every attempt to resolve the internal conflicts. In the event the conflicts cannot be resolved and a decision is made to proceed with dissolution, provision shall be made by vote of the church previous to the dissolution of the corporation, to assign all of the assets to one or more fundamental, Bible believing, non-profit organizations, such as churches, missions, schools, or associations. None of the assets shall be given to any individual.



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## ARTICLE 12 – AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION

1. The proposed amendment is brought to the Board of Deacons for consideration. This proposed amendment can be brought by any regularly attending church member in good standing or by a review committee established by the Board of Deacons. After appropriate prayer and discussion, which may require more than one meeting in order to properly examine the proposed amendment, the Board of Deacons will make the decision. If approved, the proposed amendment will be presented to the church congregation for a vote.
2. The church secretary will prepare an insert to be placed in the bulletin for the next two weeks. The bulletin will also include the information that absentee ballots can be obtained from the Clerk.
3. The chairman of the Board of Deacons (or designated alternate) will read the proposed amendment to the congregation at (2) two Sunday morning services.
4. The church secretary will prepare the proposed amendment as both a ballot and an absentee ballot. It will be reviewed by the Board of Deacons prior to use.
5. A special church meeting will be called.
6. The meeting will be conducted per the normal procedures for church special meetings.
7. If the proposed amendment is approved by 75 percent of the members present for voting (plus absentee ballots returned prior to the meeting), the proposed amendment is incorporated as part of the Constitution. It will be added to Article 13 and will be recorded on the Constitutional Amendment Record Sheet attached to the Constitution.
8. If the proposed amendment fails to win approval, it can be resubmitted for consideration per the normal procedure after a minimum of three months have passed.



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## ARTICLE 13 – AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

All amendments will be attached as part of this article and will be recorded on the Constitutional Amendment History Record Sheet by the Clerk.

1. The Record Sheet will be formatted as follows:
  - a. Amendment letter
  - b. Date of amendment
  - c. Section amended
  - d. Constitution Revision Level at the time of amendment
  - e. Date of inclusion in the body of the Constitution (see number 2)
  
2. In the event that the Constitution is revised so that the recorded amendments are incorporated, this will be noted on the Record Sheet by placing the date of incorporation in the appropriate column.
  
3. A revision will be performed periodically as requested by the Board of Deacons. A “revision” is defined as the incorporation of the previously approved amendments into the body of the Constitution and the correction of any spelling or grammatical errors. The Clerk will perform the task. The revised Constitution will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Deacons.
  
4. If it is determined that an extensive review of a major issue or issues within the Constitution should be performed, a Constitutional Review Committee will be appointed. The results will be reported back and voted on (if amendments are proposed) by following the regular amendment procedure. The committee will consist of the following regularly attending church members in good standing who will be appointed by the Board of Deacons:
  - a. The pastor(s)
  - b. All of the deacons
  - c. One or more trustees
  - d. Church Clerk
  - e. Additional church members
  
5. The Constitution Document must include the following to be considered valid:
  - a. Page numbers (including total number of pages; i.e. “1 of 12”)
  - b. Revision date
  - c. Revision level



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## AMENDMENT HISTORY RECORD SHEET

Letter or Number	Brief Explanation of Amendment	Date of Amendment	Section Amended	Constitution Revision Level	Date of Inclusion
	Revised Constitution	10/28/03	All of Document	1	10/28/03
A	Change of annual business meeting date.	01/10/10	Article 6 – Meetings  Section 4 – Annual Business Meeting	2	01/25/10
B	1) Linked To (Policies, Processes, and Belief Statement)  2) Removed Sunday School Superintendent Position	06/08/14	All of Document	3	06/08/14
C	1) Added Section 3 - Teaching & Preaching Belief Statement  2) Added statement to use Robert's Rules of Order in Six places  3) Separate “RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PASTORS” into two sections. One section for all pastors and one section for senior pastor  4) Improved the definition of Church membership for the senior pastor and any associate pastors	06/14/15	All of Document	4	06/14/15