

CONSTITUTION
AND
DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

FOR

MISSISSAUGA CITY BAPTIST CHURCH

November 25, 2001

Mississauga City Baptist Church - Constitution

PREFACE

When I was invited to give leadership in the beginning of a new congregation, I welcomed the opportunity. Here would be the opportunity to start off in a way that would avoid many of the hang-ups of an older, entrenched, and established congregation. The community would be new, attracting people from previous settings who were looking for a new beginning in their lives. From the start our approach has been unrestricted and so has growth. However, we came to the point in our growing experience where our identity required description and our congregation required direction. As we take these adventurous steps, let us keep alert to the new ways in which the Spirit of God is moving through the church today.

In preparation for the proposed constitution, I read the report of The Task Force of our Baptist Convention which was presented to The Council and The Planning Committee of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec on November 23rd, 1973. I want to share with you some of the excellent suggestions made in this report.

First of all our Convention was called upon to "recognize the importance of its role as a catalyst in promoting renewed emphasis on sharing" (p.II-2). Our new congregation in Mississauga along with eight other extension churches exist as a result of such catalytic action. I am grateful to God for the opportunity and privilege of being a part of, and sharing with, our Convention in its ministry here. The Convention has been generous in its support and given us freedom in developing a new congregation.

Secondly, the report calls for "a major emphasis to be placed on the training of people...to do the jobs that must be done if we are to advance." Lloyd Ogilvie is quoted as saying in his address titled, *Patterning Tomorrow's Church*, "We have deployed people in the world to be something for which they have neither the power, nor the personal experience, nor the motive, nor the direction to be..." (p.II-2) The constitution demands a trained and dedicated leadership who will disciple those under their care to become the living, ministering, and witnessing people God intended them to be.

Thirdly, the report called for a return to New Testament principles as our guide for church growth and government.

"Direction for achievement of this self-disciplined objective must be based on New Testament teachings and uninhibited by man made doctrine"(p.II-4). The Task Force found that the purpose and direction of the church is found not in our plans, dreams, or how-to-manuals, but set out very definitely in Scripture. After much searching by each member of the group, we agreed that every aspect of church structure, government, and program can find its beginnings and guidance set out in Scripture. We further agreed that "the healthy church of today would be patterned after Scriptural outlines." (p.II-2).

The proposals put forward in this constitution embody this purpose of returning to and applying Scriptural guidelines to the local church today. In another place the report states,

"The local church cannot, and will not, be revitalized from without, it must come from within. To accomplish this end, ministers and laity alike must read the New Testament without the bonds of doctrine holding them back. We as Baptists, must accept that we do not have the corner on biblical interpretation. We must continue to search and listen. Each minister without pessimism must alert his congregation to the potential dangers that exist, but at the same time outline the future with cautious optimism."

This constitution is the result of such a searching and listening process tempered with caution but with the eye to the future with the optimism of faith.

Fourthly, the report advocates the full realization and practise of a doctrine cherished by Baptists, the priesthood of all believers. This is well expressed in the following quotation:

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"Many ministers will find it necessary to relinquish traditions and habits of sole control of administration and regarding the pulpit as their exclusive domain; if various members of the congregation are to be given opportunity for spiritual development and training for greater expansion of the lay ministry" (p.II-4).

The proposals setting forth the role of pastors and elders and the office of deacons further enlarges upon this principle.

A Church constitution should reflect what God is doing through you and me. It should not limit what God is doing or hinder the liberty of the Holy Spirit. The principles embodied and expressed in this constitution reflect what I believe God is doing through you and me and its articles give to the Head of the Church, our Lord Jesus Christ, the freedom He desires to work among us in the power of the Holy Spirit.

It has been my pleasure to spend a great deal of time reading books on the subject of renewal. Books such as *The Greening of The Church* by Findley B. Edge, *The Church That Dared to Change* by Michael R. Tucker, *Renew My Church* by David Haney, *Full Circle* by David Mains, *The Birth, Care, and Feeding of a Local Church* by Donald J. MacNair, *Why Churches Die* by Hollis L. Green have impressed upon my mind and heart the new ways God is moving in the church today. Many of the concepts described by these writers about their experience of church renewal have been concepts which I have held for some time. To read these concepts was like a confirmation that we are moving in the right direction and that we are not alone in this adventure.

I want to thank Bruce Miller and Russell Spence for the hours of work put into preparation of the Doctrinal Statement. Also, I am grateful to our Steering Committee - consisting of Doreen Harris who served as our secretary, Eduardo Antonio, Thomas Kinslow, Norman Crawford, Russell Spence - for the hours of time spent in reading, discussion, re-writing and reworking the constitution so that it may be presented to you in its present form. I also want to thank my wife Susan for the hours she spent typing the manuscript onto stencils so they might be duplicated.

The Old Testament prophet Isaiah prophesied that God would do a new Thing, "Behold, I will do a new thing..." (Isaiah 43:19). The New Testament seer, the apostle John similarly recorded the words of "one that sat upon the throne...Behold I make all things new..." (Revelation 21:5). Without question God is doing a "new thing" in the church and His desire is to "make all things new". There is nothing I desire more for this congregation known as Mississauga City Baptist Church than the practical realization of God's recreating and renewing work. It is in this spirit that this constitution was recommended. I trust you will join your life with me and with us as together we venture with God in new beginnings.

Frank E. Beerman,
Founder and Former Pastor,
Mississauga City Baptist Church

March, 1976
Mississauga, Ontario

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ARTICLE I

NAME AND AFFILIATION

Name

The name of this congregation shall be:

MISSISSAUGA CITY BAPTIST CHURCH

Affiliation

1. This church is a member of the Toronto Area Association of Baptist Churches, the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, and the Baptist Federation of Canada or their successors.
2. This church shall not be able to withdraw from such association, convention and federation except by the two-thirds majority vote of its members, present and voting at a meeting convened and held for the purpose of deciding this question, previous notice of the date and purpose of the meeting having been given publicly at least four weeks before the date of the meeting.
3. This church shall send delegates to association, federation and convention meetings, and support such bodies financially.

ARTICLE II

PURPOSES

The purposes for which this Church is constituted are:

1. The worship of God and the administration of the ordinances of the New Testament.
2. To bring people into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord through the proclamation of the gospel of Christ.
3. To teach the principles of Christian living for the development of a Christ-like character.
4. To support the spreading of the gospel of Christ throughout the world.
5. To promote Christian morals within our community, our education system, and every area of society.
6. To express the love of Christ for all who are homeless, destitute, hungry, victims of disaster, the sick, and those in prison.

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ARTICLE III

COVENANT AND STATEMENT OF FAITH

Covenant

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit we do now, in the presence of God, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love, to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness and comfort, to promote its prosperity and spirituality, to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines, to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain the family and personal devotions, to religiously educate our children, to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances, to walk circumspectly in the world, to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment, to avoid all tattling, backbiting and excessive anger, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Saviour.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love, to remember each other in prayer, to aid each other in sickness and distress, to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech, to be slow to take offence, always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Saviour, to secure it without delay.

We, moreover, engage, that when we remove from this place, we will as soon as possible unite with some other church, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant, and the principles of God's Word.

Statement of Faith

1. **WE BELIEVE in the plenary and verbal inspiration** of the Old and New Testament scriptures and that they are the supreme and final authority in faith, doctrine, and life. (*Psalm 119:160; Proverbs 30:5; Matthew 5:17,18; II Timothy 3:16,17*)
2. **WE BELIEVE in the one true God:** who is an intelligent, sovereign spiritual and personal being; perfect, infinite, and eternal in His being, holiness and love, wisdom and power; absolutely separate from and above the world as its creator, yet everywhere present in the world as the upholder of all things. He is revealed to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, three distinct persons but without division of nature, essence or being, and each having a distinct ministry in God's relation to His creation and people. (*Genesis 1:1,2; Deuteronomy 6:4; Psalm 83:18; John 10:30; 15:26; Ephesians 4:6; Philippians 2:5-11*)
3. **WE BELIEVE in the Lord Jesus Christ** who is the second person of the triune God, the eternal Word and only begotten Son; that without any change in His divine person He became man by miracle of the virgin birth thus to continue forever as both true God and true man, one person with two natures; that as man He was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin; that as the perfect Lamb of God He gave Himself in death upon the cross, bearing there the sin of the world, and suffering the full penalty of divine wrath in our stead; that He arose from the grave in a glorified body; that as our great high priest He ascended into Heaven there to appear at the right hand of God as our advocate and intercessor. (*Matthew 1:18-25; John 1:1,14; 3:16; I Corinthians 15:3-6; Galatians 4:4-5; Philippians 2:5-10; Hebrews 4:14-16; I John 2:1,2; I Timothy 2:5*)
4. **WE BELIEVE in the Holy Spirit,** the third Person of the triune God, that He can be resisted, tempted, grieved and quenched. His work is to convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. When He is received,

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following conviction of sin and genuine repentance toward God, He indwells the believer and at that time baptizes him into the body of Christ. This is the only baptism of the Holy Spirit. The indwelling of the believer is regeneration or the "new birth". He leads and guides the believer into all truth thus producing the fruit of the Spirit in the believer's life. He anoints for service and empowers for life. He gives a gift or gifts to each and every child of God for his place of ministry in the body of Christ, the true church. (*Acts 7:51; 5:9; 6:5,8; Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; John 16:5-11; 14:16,26; 3:5; Galatians 5:22-23; Luke 4:18; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11,13*)

5. **WE BELIEVE in the existence of Satan**, who originally was created a holy and perfect being, but through pride and wicked ambition rebelled against God thus becoming utterly depraved in character, the great adversary of God and His people, leader of all other demons, the deceiver and god of this present world; that his powers are vast, but strictly limited by the permissive will of God who over-rules all his wicked devices for good; that he was defeated and judged at the cross, and therefore his final doom is certain; that we are able to resist and overcome him only in the armour of God by the blood of the Lamb and through the power of the Holy Spirit. (*Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:11-19; Ephesians 6:12; 1 Peter 5:8; 1 John 3:8; Revelation 12:9-11; 20:10*)
6. **WE BELIEVE that man was created in the image of God**, that he sinned and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death. All human beings are born with a sinful nature and are incapable of pleasing God. Only through repentance from sin and acceptance by faith of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour can regeneration by the Holy Spirit and life that is pleasing to God be received. (*Genesis 1:27; Psalm 51:5; Romans 3:10-12,23; 5:12; 8:8; 10:9-13; John 1:12; 3:5-7*)
7. **WE BELIEVE that spiritual growth and maturity in the Christian life**, should be the only goal of every believer. This can only be achieved through the work of the Holy Spirit in the personal and collective study of the bible and prayer on a regular and consistent basis. Every believer has received a gift or gifts from the Holy Spirit and has both the right and responsibility to exercise these gifts under the direction of the Holy Spirit and in fellowship with the Christian church for the work of the ministry for the building up of the body of Christ. We believe in the priesthood of all believers; that they have direct access into God's presence without the need of a human priest or intermediary (*1 Peter 2:1-3,5; John 14:26; 11 Timothy 2:15; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; Romans 12:6-8; 1 Timothy 2:5*)
8. **WE BELIEVE that sanctification**, is that work of Spirit of God within the believer which sets him apart for God. This setting apart takes place at that time when the sinner is regenerated by the Spirit of God. Sanctification is also the work of God in the believer through the Word which changes him into the image of Christ progressively. Sanctification is that work of God which perfects the believer into the likeness of Christ. (*1 Peter 1:1-2; John 17:17; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; Romans 8:5-11; Galatians 5:16-26*)
9. **WE BELIEVE that when a sinner is convicted** of sin, has genuine repentance toward God, and is regenerated by the Spirit of God, he is placed in Christ for time and eternity. This should not be construed as a licence to sin. Christ, and Christ alone saves. When He imparts eternal life it is "eternal life" - everlasting life based only upon His finished work on the cross. Should our walk play any part in our "staying saved", then salvation becomes Christ plus our walk and we would have whereof to boast when we reach heaven. "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." (*John 3:16; 10:28-29; Romans 6:1-2; 1 John 3:9; Galatians 6:14*)
10. **WE BELIEVE in the resurrection of the believer**, to eternal life and in the resurrection of the unbeliever to everlasting punishment; that the spirits of the saved at death go immediately to be with Christ in heaven, whence they await the resurrection of their bodies when Christ comes for His own. We believe that their works shall be brought before the judgment seat of Christ for the determination of rewards. We believe that the spirits of the unsaved at death descend immediately into Hades where they are kept under punishment until the final day of judgment, at which time their bodies shall be raised from the grave, that they shall be judged at the great white throne and cast into Hell, the place of final and everlasting punishment. (*Romans 6:23; 11 Corinthians 5:10; Luke 16:19-24; Revelation 20:11-15; 21:8; John 10:28-29*)

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11. **WE BELIEVE in the second coming of Christ**, that His coming in the air to rapture His church, which is our blessed Hope, is always imminent; that when He has first, by resurrection of the dead and translation of the living, removed from the earth His waiting Church, He will then pour out the righteous judgments of God upon the unbelieving world and afterwards descend with His church and establish His glorious and literal kingdom over all nations for a thousand years. (*1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 19:11-16; 20:4-6*)

12. **WE BELIEVE in the following ordinances of the church**. We believe in the regular observance of the Lord's Supper according to the example the Lord Jesus Christ gave us. It is a memorial of His death. We believe in baptism by immersion for all believers as a necessary step of obedience to God's Word and a witness of the commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ. (*1 Corinthians 11:23-31; Matthew 28:19; Acts 8:38*)

13. **WE BELIEVE that all believers are members of the body of Christ**, the universal church, and are in submission to Jesus Christ, the head. As such, scripture commands us to preserve an attitude of love and peace towards one another and to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the body of Christ. (*Ephesians 1:22,23; 4:1-3*)

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ARTICLE IV

THE CONGREGATION AND MEMBERSHIP

Reception of members

All candidates for membership shall be interviewed by representatives of the elders board of the church who shall then submit the names of said candidates to the church for approval. Candidates shall be admitted into the fellowship by one of the following methods:

1. **By Baptism:** Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, giving evidence of a change of heart, and accepting the statement of faith and practice as adopted by this church may, upon immersion, be received into its membership upon request.
2. **By Letter:** Any member from some other church, holding the same faith and practice, and who has been immersed upon profession of faith, may be received by a letter of recommendation and admission.
3. **By Christian Experience:** Any person who has been immersed upon profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord and is in harmony with the statement of faith and practice of this church may be received upon his or her Christian experience.
4. **By Restoration:** Members of this church from whom the hand of fellowship has been withdrawn may be restored to membership (see item 3 and 5 under Termination of membership).

Termination of membership

1. **By Letter:** A member, upon request may be transferred to the fellowship of another church by letter to the church.
2. **By Erasure:** A member uniting with some other church without notifying this Church is automatically removed from the membership of this church.
3. **By Exclusion:** A member may be dismissed after the exercise of scriptural church discipline.
4. **By Death**
5. **By Decision or Default:** (See Renewal of Membership)

Renewal of membership

Members shall covenant together annually to re-affirm their commitment of membership before God. Failure to renew membership on this occasion will be considered a termination of membership by decision or default, upon the concurrence of the elders' board. In the event the member is unable to be present for justifiable reasons, a letter of intent will be accepted.

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Inactive membership

Members who, because of age, infirmity or similar reasons, are unable to maintain an active membership and participation may be declared 'Inactive Members' upon the concurrence of the pastors and elders. They will be maintained as members until such time as their condition has changed.

Non-voting members

Persons who are members and are less than 18 years of age shall NOT have voting privileges at congregation meetings.

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ARTICLE V

GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH

The Pre-eminence of JESUS CHRIST as the Head of the Church

Fundamental to the exercise of church government is the fact that Jesus Christ is the head of the church. All those who give leadership and serve in this church shall do so with the motivation "...that in all things He (Jesus Christ) might have the pre-eminence." (*Colossians 1:18*)

Pastors and Elders

Recognizing the plurality of leadership within the church in the New Testament, and seeking to follow the pattern set for us therein, the spiritual leaders of this congregation shall be known as pastors and elders. Note that in the scriptures these terms, including that of bishop, are used interchangeably to indicate the same office. (*Acts 20:28, I Timothy 3:1f; and Titus 1:5f*)

Deacons

Deacons in the New Testament are distinguished as an office within the local church government distinct from that of elders (*Philippians 1:1*). The qualifications for this ministry are listed in *I Timothy 3: 8-12*, and *Acts 6:3* (*Galatians 3:28, Acts 16:40, 17:4, 18:18, 24, 26, 21:9, Romans 16:1, 2*).

Government Structure

The church, its activities, and its life shall be governed by a group of elected boards, committees, and offices each with a specific set of tasks and responsibilities. Election of the members to positions on these boards, committees and offices will be based on a majority vote of the membership at a church business meeting for the term stated for each position.

The **Pastor** or **Pastors** shall be called by the church to provide full-time or part-time work for the church and its ministry and shall provide spiritual leadership and such duties and tasks according to their gifts and talents and as required by the church.

The Boards of the Church shall be:

- a) **Board of Elders** to provide spiritual leadership and general oversight for the church;
- b) **Board of Deacons** to have charge of all physical properties and financial matters of the church;
- and
- c) **Board of Trustees** to conduct the legal business of the church;

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The Standing Committees of the Church shall be:

- a) **Nominating Committee** to assist in the nomination of members to the elected positions;
- b) **Christian Education Committee** to co-ordinate the christian education ministries of the church;
- c) **Fellowship Committee** to co-ordinate the social and fellowship ministries of the church;
- d) **Music Committee** to co-ordinate the music ministries of the church;
- and
- e) **Mission & Evangelism Committee** to co-ordinate the missions, local outreach and evangelism ministries of the church.

The Officers of the Church shall be:

- a) **Church Clerk** to keep the church records and the register of members and to conduct necessary correspondence;
- b) **Treasurer** to keep the financial records of the church and to pay approved accounts;
- c) **Assistant Treasurer** to assist the Treasurer;
- d) **Envelope Secretary** to keep the record of receipts from church envelope contributions;
- and
- e) **Sunday School Superintendent** to have general oversight of the Sunday School program.

There shall be additional Ad-hoc Committees elected for specific tasks:

- a) **Pulpit Committee** to search for and recommend a pastor to the church when the calling of a pastor becomes necessary;
- b) **Building Committee** to administer a church building or expansion program when appropriate;
- and
- c) **other committees** as needed by the church for specified tasks.

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The various boards and standing committees may also create committees and task groups in order to carry out their mandates. Membership in these committees and task groups does not need to be voted on by the congregation and is very flexible. These committees and task groups get their instruction from and report to the board or standing committee that establishes them. Example of some of these Committees and Task Groups are:

- a) **Ushers Committee** to assist in the seating of persons at services and to take the tithes and offering during services;
- b) **Tellers** to record and count the offerings;
- c) **Visitation Committee** to assist in the visitation of members and visitors;
- d) **Nursery Committee** to provide staffing for the nursery facilities during services and church events;
- and
- c) **other committees** as needed by the church for specified tasks.

In addition, the church shall employ full-time and part-time staff as needed to carry out the regular business of the church. The duties, salaries and supervision of these staff shall be determined by the appropriate board, committee or officer of the church. Some of these Staff Positions shall be:

- a) **Custodian** to maintain the physical properties of the church;
- b) **Church Secretary** to maintain and co-ordinate the church business office;
- c) **Music Director** to provide supervision and leadership in the music ministries of the church;
- and
- d) **Auditor** to audit the church financial records.

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ARTICLE VI

THE BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND OFFICES

Pastors

Qualifications

1. The pastor or pastors must be called and shall be prepared for the full-time work of the ministry.
2. The scriptural qualifications given in Article V shall be those required of a pastor.
3. The qualification for elders shall also apply to the pastors.
4. Since he shall be a leader among leaders, the pastor shall have the gifts and training and experience deemed necessary to enable him to give such leadership.

Responsibilities and Duties

1. The responsibilities and duties provided for the elders shall apply to the pastors.
2. By virtue of office, pastors shall be ex-officio members of all boards and standing committees and shall have full voting privileges.

Appointment to office

Pastors shall be appointed to office by the procedure outlined under the Pulpit Committee.

Disputes with the Pastor(s)

1. Any dispute with the pastor(s) or the performance of their duties will be resolved in the manner prescribed by scripture in *Matthew 18:15-17* and *Deuteronomy 19:15-20*. (*2 Corinthians 13:1, 1 Timothy 5:19-20*)
2. If the severity of the dispute or an inability to find a resolution warrants it, the guidance of the Area Minister and/or the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec shall be sought and followed.

Pulpit Committee

When the calling of a pastor becomes necessary the church shall elect a pulpit committee at a duly called business meeting of the church. The pulpit committee shall search for and recommend a pastor to the church. Nominations for the pulpit committee may be made by the nominating committee in consultation with the elders.

Pastoral Call Procedure

A. Notification

Notification of the vacancy shall be sent to the Department of the Ministry of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec or its successor.

B. Names considered

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Consideration shall be given by the pulpit committee to the names suggested to it by members of the congregation, by the Department of Ministry of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec or other suitable names of which the committee may have information.

C. Statement of faith and objectives

Any pastoral candidate shall concur with and be subject to the statement of faith and objectives of this constitution, such concurrence to be confirmed prior to the presentation of such candidate's name to the church.

D. Voting by church

1. Only one name shall be presented to the church at any one time by the pulpit committee.
2. A call shall be extended only as the result of a 90 percent majority at a duly called business meeting. Vote shall be by secret ballot. Scrutineers shall be appointed at the meeting.

E. Extending the call

Following a favourable vote by the church, the pulpit committee shall instruct the church clerk to write a letter extending the official call, outlining the terms and conditions of the call in detail. All information on this calling should be placed in the church archives.

Board of Elders

Qualifications

1. The scriptural qualifications given in Article V shall be those required of an elder.
2. Since the pastors and elders are the spiritual leaders of the local church, they must be men who, by their lives and service to others, illustrate the qualities required by the scriptures.
3. Elders must be active members, in good standing, of the church.
4. In order to qualify for the office of elder, a candidate must be trained so that he comprehends the doctrine and form of government of the church and he is committed to accept the responsibilities of the oath of office.

Responsibilities & Duties

1. The pastors and elders of the church are responsible to the membership of the church for their leadership and ministry.
2. The elders shall have spiritual oversight of the church. (*Acts 20:28*)
3. All other officers, committees, and members of the church shall submit to the oversight of the pastors and elders. (*Hebrews 13:17*)
4. The elders shall oversee the ministry of the Word of God and prayer including the preaching of the Word of God in the public worship service. (*1 Timothy 3:2; 5:17*)
5. Pastoral care of the church members and adherents shall be shared among the pastors and elders. Pastors and elders must make such care a regular part of their life and ministry through personal and

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telephone visitation, use of lay visitors and referrals to pastoral staff in crisis situations. Sharing of this ministry will not place an undue burden on anyone.

6. The elders shall oversee administration of the ordinances, believer's baptism and the Lord's supper.
7. The elders shall undertake the correction and discipline of unruly members. (*1 Timothy 5:17; Matthew 18:15-17*)

Board Membership

As a general rule there shall be an elder for every twenty (20) families in the congregation.

The pastors are ex-officio members of the board of elders.

The elders shall choose an elder to be an ex-officio member of each of:

- the board of deacons;
- the nominating committee;
- the christian education committee;
- the fellowship committee;
- the music committee; and
- the mission and evangelism committee.

The **board of elders** consists of:

- elected members
- pastors (ex-officio)

Term of Office

Elders shall be elected for a three-year term of office, with the exception of full-time pastoral staff who are members ex-officio.

The general regulations for committee structure, term of office and election process in Article VII shall apply the board of elders.

Board of Deacons

Qualifications

1. The scriptural qualifications given in Article V shall be those required of a deacon.
2. Deacons must be active members, in good standing, of the church.
3. In order to qualify for the office of deacon, the candidate must show a comprehension of the doctrine and form of government of the church and is committed to accept the responsibilities of the office as outlined below:

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Responsibilities & Duties

The deacons shall:

1. function under the general oversight of the elders and be responsible to them and to the church;
2. have charge of all properties of the church. They shall authorize and supervise all maintenance, repairs, installations and construction of and upon these properties;
3. have authority to spend up to \$1,000.00 for any specific need without approval of a church business meeting;
4. be in charge of physical arrangements for all public services and meetings;
5. have charge of the ushering for all public services and meetings of the church and shall appoint a head usher from their number or from the general membership who will work under their leadership;
6. be responsible for the physical preparation and clean-up required for the communion service or Lord's supper;
7. choose, train, and supervise the tellers, who shall count the offering, prepare the deposit slip and deposit the church offering at the bank;
8. designate the chairman of all church business meetings;
9. supervise the preparation, the finalization, and the submission of the annual budget of the church to the church;
10. review the treasurer's annual report and appoint an auditor to audit this report together with all church books and those of any organization connected with the church;
11. shall be responsible to have an audited statement of the church finances presented at the annual meeting;
12. designate the treasurer and two other persons to act as co-signers of all cheques issued on behalf of the church and communicate this information to the necessary authorities;
13. be prepared to minister as requested by the elders when specific needs arise; and
14. have liaison with the custodian.

Board Membership

The board of deacons shall have nine (9) elected members.

The elders shall choose one elder to be an ex-officio member of the board of deacons.

The trustees shall choose one trustee to be an ex-officio member of the board of deacons.

The treasurer shall be an ex-officio member of the board of deacons.

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The pastors are ex-officio members of the board of deacons.

The deacons shall choose one deacon to be an ex-officio member of the nominating committee.

The **board of deacons** consists of:

- 9 elected members
- 1 elder (ex-officio)
- 1 trustee (ex-officio)
- 1 treasurer (ex-officio)
- pastors (ex-officio)

Term of Office

Deacons shall be elected for a three-year term of office, with the exception of full-time pastoral staff who are members ex-officio.

The general regulations for committee structure, term of office and election process in Article VII shall apply the board of deacons.

Board of Trustees

Qualifications

1. The trustees must be active members, in good standing, of the church.
2. The members of the board of trustees must be capable of functioning as a trustee for a charitable organization under the laws, statutes and regulations of the Province of Ontario and the Country of Canada.

Responsibilities and Duties

The trustees shall:

1. be responsible directly to the church, and may be replaced by the church if they fail to carry out their duties or to be guided by church direction in respect to the same;
2. conduct the legal business of the church, such as purchase of property, the securing of mortgages, the purchase of insurance, etc.; and
3. be the custodians of all legal and business documents in connection with the church and its property.

Board Membership

The board of trustees shall have three (3) elected members.

The trustees shall choose one trustee to be an ex-officio member of the board of deacons.

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The **board of trustees** consists of:

3 elected members

Term of Office

Trustees shall be elected by the church but can remain in office as long as they are active members in good standing. The positions are confirmed annually.

The general regulations for committee structure and election process in Article VII shall apply the board of trustees.

Nominating Committee

Qualifications

1. The nominating committee members must be active members, in good standing, of the church.
2. Because of the task of the nominating committee, the members should be acquainted with the people of the congregation of the church.

Responsibilities and Duties

The nominating committee shall:

1. assist in the nomination of members to the elected positions of the boards, committees and offices of the church;
2. seek the consent of nominees who have been nominated for all elected offices;
3. provide list of nominees for vacant positions on the boards, committees and offices to be considered at the business meeting in November; and
4. enlist members to fill the positions on boards, committees and offices which become vacant for whatever reason and nominate these members at an appropriate business meeting.

Note: The details of the nomination process are described Article VII.

Committee Membership

The nominating committee shall consist of a pastor, an elder, a deacon, and two members elected by the church.

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The **nominating committee** consists of:

- 2 elected members
- 1 elder (ex-officio)
- 1 deacon (ex-officio)
- a pastor (ex-officio)

Term of Office

The nominating committee shall be elected annually at the November business meeting to serve for following calendar year.

The general regulations for committee structure and election process in Article VII shall apply the nominating committee.

Christian Education Committee

Qualifications

1. The christian education committee members must be active members, in good standing, of the church.

Responsibilities and Duties

The christian education committee shall:

1. plan and implement a strategy of christian education in cooperation with the pastor and the board of elders;
2. foster a comprehensive program of learning activities from beginners to adults and be responsible for the proper operation of the nursery;
3. recruit and train leadership for all christian education ministries with the approval of the pastors and elders;
4. constantly bring before the church the fundamental importance of christian education to a healthy, growing church;

Committee Membership

The christian education committee will be comprised of 3 elected members.

The chairs or co-ordinators of all church ministry groups shall, by virtue of their positions, be ex-officio member of the christian education committee.

The Sunday school superintendent shall be an ex-officio member by virtue of office.

The elders shall choose one elder to be an ex-officio member of the christian education committee.

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The pastors are ex-officio members of the christian education committee.

The **christian education committee** consists of:

- 3 elected members
- 1 elder (ex-officio)
- 1 sunday school superintendent (ex-officio)
- pastors (ex-officio)
- chairs or co-ordinators of church ministry groups (ex-officio)

Term of Office

The christian education committee members shall be elected for a three-year term of office, with the exception of full-time pastoral staff who are members ex-officio.

The general regulations for committee structure, term of office and election process in Article VII shall apply the christian education committee.

Fellowship Committee

Qualifications

1. The fellowship committee members must be active members, in good standing, of the church.

Responsibilities & Duties

The fellowship committee shall:

1. foster fellowship within the church;
2. look at possible fellowship events for implementation (i.e. coffee hour following morning service, church picnics);
3. recognize and welcome visitors; and
4. integrate newcomers into our fellowship.

Committee Membership

The fellowship committee will be comprised of 6 elected members.

The elders shall choose one elder to be an ex-officio member of the fellowship committee.

The pastors are ex-officio members of the fellowship committee.

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The **fellowship committee** consists of:

6 elected members
1 elder (ex-officio)
pastors (ex-officio)

Term of Office

The fellowship committee members shall be elected for a three-year term of office, with the exception of full-time pastoral staff who are members ex-officio.

The general regulations for committee structure, term of office and election process in Article VII shall apply the fellowship committee.

Music Committee

Qualifications

1. The music committee members must be active members, in good standing, of the church.
2. As much as possible the diversity of music appreciation within the congregation should be recognized in the election of persons to this committee.

Responsibilities & Duties

The music committee shall:

1. co-ordinate the music ministries of the church;
2. have liaison with the music director;
3. be responsible for inviting outside music ministries;

Committee Membership

The music committee will be comprised of 6 elected members.

The music director shall be an ex-officio member of the music by virtue of the position.

The elders shall choose one elder to be an ex-officio member of the music committee.

A pastor is an ex-officio member of the music committee.

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The **music committee** consists of:

- 6 elected members
- music director (ex-officio)
- 1 elder (ex-officio)
- 1 pastor (ex-officio)

Term of Office

The music committee members shall be elected for a three-year term of office, with the exception of the full-time pastoral staff who is a member ex-officio.

The general regulations for committee structure, term of office and election process in Article VII shall apply the music committee.

Missions & Evangelism Committee

Qualifications

1. The missions and evangelism committee members must be active members, in good standing, of the church.

Responsibilities & Duties

The mission and evangelism committee shall:

1. promote local and world-wide missions and outreach ministries;
2. co-ordinate local outreach ministries, establishing and sustaining such an outreach as the regular ministry of this church in the community;
3. establish evangelism through visitation;
4. seek the involvement of qualified persons from the church to be trained for the sharing of this important work;
5. plan and co-ordinate mission events;
6. make recommendations to the membership of organizations or persons to be supported financially; and
7. examine and approve any request to present a mission work.

Committee Membership

The missions and evangelism committee will be comprised of 6 elected members.

The elders shall choose one elder to be an ex-officio member of the missions and evangelism committee.

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A pastor is an ex-officio member of the missions and evangelism committee.

The **missions and evangelism committee** consists of:

- 6 elected members
- 1 elder (ex-officio)
- 1 pastor (ex-officio)

Term of Office

The missions and evangelism committee members shall be elected for a three-year term of office, with the exception of the full-time pastoral staff who is a member ex-officio.

The general regulations for committee structure, term of office and election process in Article VII shall apply the missions and evangelism committee.

Church Clerk

Qualifications

1. The church clerk must be an active member, in good standing, of the church.

Responsibilities & Duties

The church clerk shall:

1. be responsible to the church through the direction of the board of elders;
2. keep an accurate record of the proceedings of the church in its meetings for business;
3. keep a register of all members of the church;
4. conduct all necessary correspondence;
5. take responsibility for the careful preservation of all church records.

Term of Office

The church clerk shall be elected annually.

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Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer

Qualifications

1. The treasurer and assistant treasurer must be active members, in good standing, of the church.

Responsibilities & Duties

The treasurer shall:

1. be responsible to the church through the direction of the board of deacons;
2. make a report to the board of deacons at their regular meeting, and a detailed financial statement to congregation at each quarterly business meeting;
3. keep a true and accurate book of accounts and record all disbursements, receipts, etc. as required in normal accounting practise and under law;
4. pay all approved accounts;
5. co-sign all cheques issued on behalf of the church with the two delegated deacons; and
6. submit an annual report to the board of deacons and shall present the audited treasurer's report to the church for acceptance at the annual business meeting.

The assistant treasurer shall:

1. carry out any of the above responsibilities as delegated by the treasurer ; and
2. carry out the duties of the treasurer as requested. In the event of the incapacity of the treasurer to carry out the duties of the treasurer. The Deacons will turn these duties over to the assistant treasurer until such time as the treasurer is able assume the position or a new treasurer is elected.

Term of Office

The treasurer and assistant treasurer shall be elected annually.

The treasurer is an ex-officio members of the board of deacons.

Envelope Secretary

Qualifications

1. The envelope secretary must be an active member, in good standing, of the church.

Responsibilities & Duties

The envelope secretary shall:

1. be responsible to the church through the direction of the board of deacons and the treasurer;
2. make an accurate accounting of all allocations designated on the offering envelopes and balance their sum total with the amount of envelope cash deposited in the bank each Sunday;

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3. transfer the record of receipts given through the church envelopes to the record book used for this purpose;
4. record any special contributions which have been made by members of the church, or others;
5. provide official receipts for all contributors during the fiscal year who have given \$10.00 or more to the church, where possible; and
6. keep the envelope record book, name cards and duplicate receipts for seven (7) years in a clear, concise, legible and secure fashion (NOTE: offering envelopes are kept for one year only).

Term of Office

The envelope secretary shall be elected annually.

Sunday School Superintendent

Qualifications

1. The sunday school superintendent must be an active member, in good standing, of the church.

Responsibilities & Duties

The sunday school superintendent shall:

1. be responsible to the church through the direction of the christian education committee;
2. have the responsibility for the general oversight of the Sunday school program;
3. work in harmony with the christian education committee.

Term of Office

The sunday school superintendent shall be elected annually.

The sunday school superintendent is an ex-officio member of the christian education committee.

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ARTICLE VII

GENERAL REGULATIONS

Church Organization

1. This church shall be supported by the voluntary offerings of its members and adherents (*1 Corinthians 16:2*). It is expected of every member of the church that he or she will support by regular and systematic giving, the total ministry and missionary enterprise of this church. Special offerings may be taken in the church at such times as are authorized by the pastors and elders.
2. The financial year shall end on the 31st day of December in each calendar year (January 1 to December 31).

Committee Structure and Organization

1. The tenure of office for the board of elders, the board of deacons and all standing committees shall be for three years, staggered so that no more than one-third of the governing body shall be retired from office in any given year. An officer who has served two three-year elected terms shall retire from the board or committee for a minimum of one year.
2. Each board, committee and organization within this church shall elect annually their own chairman, secretary and assistants, delegate specific duties and responsibilities to each member, and establish procedures and methods for their meetings and the carrying out of their responsibilities as they deem necessary and subject to the provisions of the constitution.
2. The secretary shall keep an accurate record, in a properly bound minute book, of all motions or decisions of every meeting of the board, committee, or organization. A copy of all such minutes shall be submitted to the senior pastor and to the church office. All these records shall be the property of the church, and may never be retained by any secretary after the expiry of such secretary's office.
4. Each board, committee and organization within this church shall meet, as often as deemed necessary, at an agreed time and place. There shall be a minimum of one meeting every month (with the possible exception of the summer months).
5. All boards, committees and groups shall prepare a group budget as part of the annual budgeting process of the church.
6. All boards, committees and groups shall report on their activities to the congregation at the Annual Meeting.
7. All boards, committees and groups may delegate any of their responsibilities to one or more members or a specially create task group to be carried out under their supervision. This will expedite these duties.

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Nomination and Election Process

1. Elected officers will serve from June 1st to May 31st of the next year, unless otherwise specified.
2. Only members whose names appear on the active membership roll may be nominated as officers of the church, elders, deacons, and any board or standing committee.
3. The consent of all nominees to act shall be obtained before presenting their names to the church for election.
4. The list of nominations must be posted four weeks before the May business meeting to elect officers.
5. The election of elders, deacons, and other officers of the church and committees will be held at the May business meeting.
6. In case of death, discharge or resignation of any officer, or board member, his or her place shall be filled at a church business meeting. All resignations of elected members shall be submitted in writing to the pastor and elders. Except in exceptional circumstances, a month's notice shall be required before resignation takes effect.
7. Delegates to Convention Assembly or Association shall be appointed by the church. Delegates to the Convention Assembly will receive reasonable remuneration for expenses incurred. Pastors' expenses will be met in full.

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ARTICLE VIII

MEETINGS

1. The annual meeting of the church shall be held as early as possible in the New Year and its date shall be set jointly by the elders and deacons, usually in February.

The annual reports of all boards, committees, officers and organizations of the church shall be presented at the annual meeting.

The deacons shall be responsible to have an audited statement of the church finances presented at the annual meeting.
2. Church business meetings shall be held regularly, usually in February (annual meeting), May, September and late November.

The election of boards, committees and officers of the church shall be held at the May business meeting. The financial budget for the church for the next year shall be presented and voted on at the November business meeting.
3. Church business meetings may be called by the pastors, elders, or deacons, or upon written request to the elders by any ten church members.
4. Notice of church business meetings shall be given at least 2 weeks prior to the meetings.
5. For the purpose of a particular meeting or a particular vote, any member may assign his or her vote to another member by means of a written and signed statement. The proxy vote may be used as deemed appropriate or as instructed by the member.
6. A business meeting cannot commence unless 25% of the voting church membership is present, bodily or by proxy, and not more than 25% of the quorum is by proxy.
7. The standard rule of procedure in all business meetings will be Robert's Rule of Order.
8. Voting privileges shall be limited to persons who are members and are 18 years of age or older.
9. The chairman of any business meetings shall be appointed by the deacons.

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ARTICLE IX

AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended at a regular church business meeting, provided that the amendments be approved by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present (proxy votes are not allowed), and provided that:

1. Notice of motion is given at a previous church business meeting;

and
2. By authority of the pastors and elders, notice of the proposed amendment is announced and posted by the church clerk at least one month in advance of the business meeting called to deal with it.

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APPENDIX

1. This congregation shall function as a non-profit organization with any profits or assets realized from its operation being used for the sole purpose of promoting its objectives.
2. In the event of dissolution of this congregation all remaining assets after payment of liabilities, shall be disbursed to the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, or its successor.
3. This document is effective as of
4. The signatures of the present officers of the organization.
(Trustees) signed:

Norman Crawford
Paul Crossett
Fred Thompson

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GLOSSARY

Terms and definitions of wording as used in this Constitution

<u>Word Used:</u>	<u>Explanation/definition:</u>
Congregation.....	a religious community bound by a common rule. Persons who have become members of MCBC or have an active part in its ministries.
Member (Membership)	persons who have been accepted by vote of the membership under the conditions outlined in ARTICLE IV
Elected	a voluntary, non-paid office/committee, with a specified term of office; nominated by the Nominating Committee & by vote of the membership.
Appointed.....	a paid staff position, presented by the appropriate authorized Committee & by vote of the membership.
Audit, Audited.....	to examine, adjust & certify the financial accounts or an examination of financial accounts to establish their correctness <u>Two Types:</u> 1) internal annual examination by an volunteer accountant. 2) external audit by a paid professional Chartered Public Accountant (CPA).
Office	that which is performed, assigned, or intended to be done by a particular person
Officer	an individual elected to a position related to a specific function, not necessarily part of a Standing Committee or Board.
Committee.....	a group of persons elected to act upon some matter
Standing committee	a committee elected for a continuing regular or permanent use
Ad hoc committee	a committee elected with respect to a particular purpose or task for a defined period of time
Ex-officio	"by virtue of or because of office or position" (unless otherwise specified, a voting member).
Board.....	"an organized official body". Within this Constitution, as found in scripture or law.
Plenary	complete in every respect.

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HISTORICAL SUMMARY of MISSISSAUGA CITY BAPTIST CHURCH

NOTE: The following historical information is NOT legal part of the Constitution.

- Nov. 1972 Representatives of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, Toronto Association and the Department of Canadian Missions met at 3434 Cawthra Road North to view and bid on this property as the site for a new extension cause. The property was purchased.
- Jan. 29 1973 Rev. Frank Beerman of Rosedale Baptist Church, Welland asked to pioneer work in Silver Creek area of Mississauga.
- Aug. 1 1973 Rev. Beerman began his ministry as pastor of the new extension cause in Mississauga.
- Aug. 31 1973 An outdoor Vacation Bible School program held in Silver Creek Public School yard.
- Sept. 9 1973 The first worship service was held in the auditorium of Silver Creek Public School - 32 attended and offering was \$9.67.
- Sept. 30 1973 The dedication of the new church site was held at 3434 Cawthra Road North.
- Oct. 1974 Renovations begun to the house on the 3434 Cawthra Road property so that it could be used for services during the week.
- Dec. 22 1974 The first gathering in Cawthra House was held on Sunday evening for a Carol Sing.
Morning worship services held at Canadian Martyrs School and then at the Valleys Senior Public School.
- Mar. 1976 Church Constitution and Statement of Faith completed.
- Jan. 30 1977 Service of Organization held for 32 charter members. Constitution adopted.
- Apr. 8 1979 Sod turning ceremony at 3434 Cawthra Road North.
- Sept. 23 1979 The first worship service was held in the new church building at 11:00 AM. The service was telecast on Cable 10 TV.
- Oct. 28 1979 The dedication of the new church sanctuary.
- Jan. 1982 Assistant pastor-in-training John Bell appointed.
- Fall 1983 Church grounds were completed as to landscaping and paving of the parking lot.

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ADOPTED - January 30, 1977

Amended - February 22, 1981

Amended - March 28, 1984

Amended - May 2, 1984

Amended - November 30, 1985

Amended - May 27, 1987

Amended - November 26, 1988

Amended - February 22, 1989

Amended - September 25, 1991

Amended - February 26, 1992

Rewritten - November 30, 1994

Amended - March 6, 1996 (Article 6)

Amended – September 24, 1997 (Article 6)

Amended – November 25, 2001 (Article 7 & 8)

Major rewrite and changes to Constitution

Addition to Article 6 –Assistant Treasurer

Addition to Article 6 –Disputes with Pastor

Change to Article 7 - Office Term (June – May)

-Election in May

Change to Article 8 – Business Meetings ‘Regularly

-Election in May