

EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I - ORGANIZATION

Section 1 - Name

This local assembly of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ shall be known as Emmanuel Baptist Church of Nairobi, Kenya.

Section 2 – Affiliations

Emmanuel Baptist Church shall not hold organized affiliation with any association, convention, conference, or council of churches but shall be an independent, fundamental, local assembly of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ retaining the right and assuming the responsibility to act for itself according to the teaching of the Word of God under the counsel of the Holy Spirit. This church shall, however, welcome the fellowship of the saints everywhere who give evidence of true conversion by the orthodoxy of their doctrine and conduct, and by their separation from apostasy, provided that such fellowship does not jeopardize its autonomy.

Section 3 – Authority

In all matters of fellowship, discipline, order, and polity, the New Testament shall be the sole authority at Emmanuel Baptist Church. Realizing that we shall differ among ourselves and with other believers in our present understanding of parts of God’s Word, in methods, and in procedures, we shall endeavor “to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” “till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

ARTICLE II – DOCTRINE

The appended doctrinal statement shall be designated as the Emmanuel Baptist Church Statement of Faith and shall constitute the doctrinal basis on which this assembly is founded and by which it shall function.

ARTICLE III – PURPOSE

The purpose for which Emmanuel Baptist Church is established shall be to bear a united witness to the faith of its members in the whole Bible as the verbally inspired Word of God; to spread the

gospel of Jesus Christ; to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints; to accept as its supreme task the evangelization of the world; to yield unto God so as to be a constant Spirit-filled witness to those around us; and to build up its people in the most holy faith.

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 – Qualifications

Any person professing faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior who gives satisfactory evidence of having been born again may, by the vote of the church, be received into the membership of Emmanuel Baptist Church after baptism provided that he/she will subscribe to the doctrines and policies of this assembly. Membership in Emmanuel Baptist Church shall not be open to any person who at the same time holds membership in a secret order or is affiliated in any way with the ecumenical movement of our day, or with the modern charismatic movement.

Section 2 – Admission

Any person seeking membership in Emmanuel Baptist Church shall be recommended by the elders after he/she has satisfied them as to the genuineness of his/her profession and purpose. Each candidate for membership shall give his/her testimony of salvation to the church in assembly and shall be received into the fellowship by the vote of the congregation in one of the following ways:

1. Profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ followed by baptism; or
2. Statement of experience of regeneration, if already baptized as a believer; or
3. On the promise of a letter of recommendation from another Baptist Church which is fundamental in its defense of the once delivered faith; or
4. Restoration, if having been excluded from the membership of Emmanuel Baptist Church, and upon confession of his/her errors, giving satisfactory evidence of repentance.

Section 3 – Dismissal

Membership in Emmanuel Baptist Church may be dissolved in one of the following ways:

1. By death.
2. By letter of recommendation. Such a letter shall be granted by vote of the church in one of its regular business meetings for any member in good standing to any church of like faith and practice which requests it.
3. By erasure in the case of a member who unites with another church to which Emmanuel

Baptist Church cannot grant a letter of recommendation, or in the case of a member's continuous absence from the services of Emmanuel Baptist Church for six months without satisfactory reasons.

4. By the request of any member who wishes to withdraw from the fellowship of Emmanuel Baptist Church.

Membership in Emmanuel Baptist Church shall be subject to revocation upon the recommendation of the elders and two thirds majority vote of the membership gathered at a members meeting after Scriptural discipline has failed to correct unscriptural and hurtful conduct and doctrine. In case of persistent repetition of conduct unbecoming to professing Christians and in every case involving gross immorality, a member shall be excommunicated from the fellowship of Emmanuel Baptist Church and his/her name removed from the roll.

ARTICLE V – GOVERNMENT

Section 1 – Form

The government of Emmanuel Baptist Church shall be congregational in nature. The business of the church shall be led by the elders of the church and transacted by the congregation in its bi-annual business meetings as defined in Article VI, Section 4. All interim business shall be transacted by the officers of the church except in such cases as should require special sessions of the congregation. The action of the officers shall be subject to the entire body.

Section 2 – Officers and Staff

The Biblical offices of the church are elders and deacons. In addition to the offices of elder and deacon, the church is required to identify certain individuals as trustees to serve as representatives of the church in legal proceedings. Trustees will be selected from amongst the elders to serve in this capacity. In addition to church officers, the church may employ staff to fulfill duties associated with pastoral assistance and church administration. All officers and pastoral staff must be members of this church prior to assuming their responsibilities. Administrative staff need not be members of the church.

(A) Elders

The elders shall be comprised of not less than three men who satisfy the qualifications for the office of elder set forth in I Timothy 3: 1–7 and Titus 1: 6–9. No elder shall hold the office of deacon during his tenure. Subject to the will of the congregation, the elders shall oversee the

ministry and resources of the church. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6: 1–6 and I Peter 5: 1–4, the elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God’s flock. The church shall recognize men gifted and willing to serve in this calling, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections. This recognition shall be reaffirmed by the church triennially.

The church shall recognize one of the elders as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching and shall identify him as the Lead Pastor. His call shall not be subject to the triennial reaffirmation or to the term limitation set out in the following paragraph. He shall preach on the Lord's Day, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, and perform such other duties as usually pertain to that office, or as set forth in the constitution. In the absence or incapacity of the lead pastor the elders shall assume responsibility for his duties, any of which can be delegated. The church may call additional elders to full-time ministry who will serve as part of the pastoral staff. The membership shall specifically approve all candidates to fill the positions of Lead Pastor or those serving as part of the pastoral staff.

Elders may or may not serve in full time ministry or as members of the pastoral staff and will exercise equal authority regardless of this distinction. Elders not serving in full time ministry or as members of the pastoral staff may only serve two consecutive three-year terms. After a one year sabbatical that elder may again be elected to office. An elder's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. Any two members with reason to believe that an elder should be dismissed should express such concern to the elders and, if need be, to the congregation. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18: 15–17 and I Timothy 5: 17–21. Any of the elders may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the members at any members’ meeting of the church.

The elders shall take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members, examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions, oversee the work of the deacons and appointed church agents and committees, conduct worship services, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, equip the membership for the work of the ministry, encourage sound doctrine and practice, admonish and correct error, oversee the process of church discipline, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church, and mobilize the church for world missions. The elders are further to ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, share our fundamental convictions. The elders of Emmanuel Baptist Church will supervise the church in the call of its Lead Pastor and Associate Pastors. The elders may establish ministry positions or committees to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. The elders shall elect a chairman of elders’ meetings and shall also elect one of their number to serve as moderator of members’ meetings.

(B) Deacons

The office of deacon is described in I Timothy 3: 8–13 and Acts 6: 1–7. The church shall recognize, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections, members who are giving of themselves in service to the church, and who possess particular gifts of service. These members shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as deacons. They shall be elected to one term lasting for a maximum of three years and may be elected to another term after which they would step down for at least one year. Deacons shall care for the temporal needs of members, attend to the accommodations for public worship, and encourage and support those able to help others and those with gifts of administration. The deacons shall receive, hold, and disburse a fund for benevolence, reporting on its use to the elders at their request, and reporting to the church its total receipts and total disbursements. The deacons, with the agreement of the elders, may establish unpaid administrative positions or committees of members to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities in the church. Any two members with reason to believe that a deacon should be dismissed should express such concern to the elders. Any of the deacons may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the members at any members' meeting of the church.

(C) Staff

The elders shall have primary responsibility for the employment, supervision, and evaluation of staff members. The elders may also propose funding for new paid staff positions. The scope and approval of job descriptions for any staff position shall reside in the hands of those with hiring authority for that position. This responsibility may, on a case-by-case basis, be delegated to another staff member. Staff positions fall into two primary categories, Pastoral Staff, and Administrative Staff:

1. Pastoral Staff

The pastoral staff will be comprised of those elders that are employed by the church and other individuals not serving as elders that are employed by the church to assist the elders in their pastoral duties. The duties, responsibilities, duration of service of pastoral staff members shall be clearly defined in their job description. Pastoral staff will conduct their duties under the oversight of the elders.

2. Administrative Staff

The lead pastor may hire additional staff to assist with the administration of the office and the running and maintenance of the church facility. This may include an administrative assistant, cleaners, guards etc.

Section 3 – Departments and Committees

The organized departments and committees of Emmanuel Baptist Church shall be kept as simple as possible and at a minimum, developing only as the need arises, and in keeping with the New Testament provision for teaching and training the saved and the proclamation of the gospel throughout the world.

Section 4 - Discipline

Should any member of Emmanuel Baptist Church become an offense to the church, its name, and our Lord by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct, or by persistent breach of his/her covenant vows, or by gross impropriety, or misdemeanor in office, or by willfully promoting schism or discord in the church, the church may censure, reprimand, and/or excommunicate him/her from membership. Such action shall be taken only after every reasonable Christian means of reconciliation has been exhausted, and after due notice has been given of the charge made, and full opportunity provided for the person charged to speak in his/her own defense. Before taking action, the church shall hear all evidence that may be produced on both sides and a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting shall be required for a decision, which decision shall be final provided, however, that any person thus excommunicated may afterwards be restored to fellowship on confession of his/her fault and after having given evidence of true repentance, or upon the discovery that the person thus excommunicated was not guilty. If the person thus charged cannot be present when disciplinary action must be taken, the church shall act according to Scriptural principles and in the spirit of the above stated procedure.

Section 5 – Church Year

Emmanuel Baptist Church shall observe the calendar year, January 1 through December 31, as its church year.

ARTICLE VI – MEETINGS

Section 1 – Worship

Meetings for spiritual worship at Emmanuel Baptist Church shall be maintained on the Lord's Day and at such other times as the church, under the Holy Spirit's direction, deems best.

Section 2 – Prayer

Mid-week Prayer Meeting at Emmanuel Baptist Church shall be maintained every Wednesday evening. Special seasons for prayer may be called by the elders as the Holy Spirit directs.

Section 3 – Special □ □

Special meetings at Emmanuel Baptist Church, such as Missionary Conferences, Bible Conferences, Youth Meetings, Evangelistic Conferences and Meetings, Revival Services, etc., may be arranged as the Holy Spirit may direct elders.

Section 4 – Business □ □

Regular congregational meetings for the transaction of church business at Emmanuel Baptist Church shall be held bi-annually on the fourth Sunday in January and July. When the need arises adjustment of schedule for any such business meeting may be made at the recommendation of the elders with the consent of the church. Special congregational meetings for the transaction of church business at Emmanuel Baptist Church may be called by the elders or at the written request signed by five voting members of the church. Announcement of any special congregational meeting, stating the time and purpose shall be made at any regular weekly worship service at least once each week for two weeks immediately preceding such special meetings. Business may be transacted only on the item(s) for which the special congregational meeting is called. Reports from all departments of Emmanuel Baptist Church shall be made at every regular congregational business meeting. The final, complete, and official reports covering all operations for the entire church year up to and including December 31 shall be made and presented for approval at the January business meeting.

Section 5 – Officers □ □

The Officers of Emmanuel Baptist Church shall meet as often as it is necessary to discharge their responsibilities.

Section 6 – Moderator

An elder of Emmanuel Baptist Church shall serve as Moderator at all congregational business meetings.

Section 7 – Secretary □ □

The Secretary of the Church shall be elected from the membership of Emmanuel Baptist Church. He/she shall faithfully keep the official minutes of the actions of the congregational business meetings.

Section 8 – Quorum □ □

At the congregational business meetings (regular and special) of Emmanuel Baptist Church, twenty percent of the voting members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Members of Emmanuel Baptist Church in good standing who are sixteen years of age and over shall constitute the “voting members” for all non-legal business. At all officers’ meetings fifty percent of the elders for the elders’ meetings or fifty percent of the deacons at deacons’ meetings, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business for Emmanuel Baptist Church. Should a quorum not be present at any meeting for the transaction of business at Emmanuel Baptist Church (both congregational and officers), the meeting may be recessed from time to time until a quorum is present.

ARTICLE VII – FINANCES

Section 1 – Offerings

Regular offerings shall be received for the Lord’s work at Emmanuel Baptist Church at the worship services, each Lord’s Day. Special offerings may be taken at any meeting for whatever causes the elders under the direction of the Holy Spirit shall deem worthy. No one will be solicited by Emmanuel Baptist Church for funds. However, we shall preach, teach, and practice the Scriptural principle of voluntary tithes and offerings, stressing the motive of love, the aim as the glory of God, the purpose as world evangelization, and the attitude of cheerfulness.

Section 2 – Allocations

Moneys received by Emmanuel Baptist Church shall be allocated according to a budget prepared annually by the elders with the assistance of the deacons assisting with church finance and adopted by the church in its January congregational business meeting. The allocations of the budget shall be retroactive to January 1 of the year of its adoption and continue in force through December 31 of the same year. The annual budget may be adjusted at any time during the year as the Lord supplies and the need arises when recommended to the church by the elders and adopted by the church. All undesignated gifts to Emmanuel Baptist Church shall be used to

fulfill its budget commitments. All designated gifts and special offerings shall be used as designated and/or for the purpose given.

Section 3 – Remuneration

The remuneration of the Pastor and other of God’s servants who are supported by Emmanuel Baptist Church shall be according to the provisions stated in the budget. Emmanuel Baptist Church shall abide by the New Testament teaching that the laborer is worthy of his hire and that they that preach the gospel shall live of the gospel, remembering that we as possessors of a common salvation and as members of one body are to have all things common. Hence, the budget shall stipulate its remunerative allowances according to the need and as the Lord provides.

ARTICLE VIII – LICENSING AND ORDINATION

Any male person giving evidence of a divine call to the Gospel ministry by the possession of gifts and graces belonging to the ministry and accepting without reservation the Confession of Faith of Emmanuel Baptist Church may be licensed or ordained to preach by the congregation at any regular or called meeting of the church upon a majority vote of the voting members present at such meeting, provided such person has first been recommended by the elders of this church. In case of ordination, an ordination council composed of the elders of Emmanuel Baptist Church, ordained ministers who are members of Emmanuel Baptist Church, and any other ordained ministers whom the elders under the direction of the Holy Spirit consider wise to invite, shall thoroughly examine the candidate for ordination with regard to his doctrinal soundness, moral and spiritual qualifications, and personal fitness. It is preferable that this be done in an open meeting of the entire assembly.

ARTICLE IX – INSTITUTIONS

Emmanuel Baptist Church shall have authority to operate schools, publish Christian literature, operate and carry on orphanages and other charitable institutions, and the like; and all of such activities shall be done in the manner approved and accepted by the congregation at any regular or specially called congregational business meeting, on majority vote of the voting members present at such meeting, provided notice is given as herein above stated, and provided further the elders have first recommended such action.

ARTICLE X – PROPERTY

Decisions relative to the acquisition or sale of real property shall require a majority vote of the eligible voters present at a properly called congregational business meeting. The elders of Emmanuel Baptist Church shall act as Trustees of all properties owned by the church and shall be authorized to execute the decisions of the church regarding such properties.

ARTICLE XI – AMENDMENTS

This document may be amended so long as the proposed amendments are consistent with the teaching of the Word of God, do not violate the purpose for which Emmanuel Baptist Church was established and the doctrinal basis on which it was founded and is to be perpetuated, and meet the needs of Emmanuel Baptist Church. Any proposed alteration or amendment to this document must be presented in writing to the elders at least one month before the regular congregational business meeting at which it is to be presented. In order for the proposed amendment to be voted upon it must be recommended to the church by the elders, and announced at any regular weekly worship service at least once each week for two weeks immediately preceding the meeting at which it is to be presented. A two-thirds majority of eligible voters present shall be necessary for its adoption.

ARTICLE XII – CORPORATE SEAL

Emmanuel Baptist Church shall have an official seal, and shall be used on such occasion as the law may require or the elders may require.

ARTICLE XIII – DISSOLUTION OF THE CHURCH

In the event of dissolution, the assets of the Emmanuel Baptist Church shall be distributed, in accordance with a plan of distribution adopted by the members, exclusively to one or more religious, charitable, or educational organizations which are not for profit and which are engaged in affairs substantially similar to those of Emmanuel Baptist Church.