

West Windsor Baptist CHURCH CONSTITUTION
Preamble

In order that we, the members of The West Windsor Baptist Church, may more readily assist each other in our Christian walk in accordance with the Holy Scripture, we declare and establish this constitution to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

ARTICLE I – NAME AND PURPOSE

SECTION 1 – NAME

This church shall be known as The West Windsor Baptist Church, located in the Town of Windsor, Broome County, New York.

SECTION 2 – PURPOSE

We exist to love God, love people, and make disciples of Jesus. This congregation is organized as a church exclusively for religious, educational, and charitable purposes.

In order to accomplish our mission, this church shall maintain a place of public worship where the Gospel shall be preached and the whole counsel of God taught. This church shall administer the scriptural ordinances and shall provide a place for fellowship, instruction, and service for those of like-minded faith. This church shall endeavor to exert a moral and Christian influence in its community. It shall also endeavor to provide an effective missionary ministry to the world. In all matters of discipline, order, and polity, the Word of God shall be the authority.

This church shall also ordain and license men to the Gospel ministry; evangelize the unsaved by the proclamation of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; educate believers in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Holy Scripture; maintain missionary activities globally; and engage in any other ministry that the church may decide from time to time to pursue in obedience to the will of God.

ARTICLE II – STRUCTURE

SECTION 1 – LEGAL

The temporal affairs of this church shall be managed under corporate title of "The West Windsor Baptist Church," according to the laws of the State of New York relating to Baptist churches.

This congregation is organized as a church exclusively for religious, educational, and charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law), including, but not limited to, the establishing and maintaining of religious worship; the building, maintaining, and operating of

churches, parsonages, or schools; and any other ministries that the church may be led of God to establish.

SECTION 2 – ORGANIZATIONAL

The governing control of this church is vested in its members.

ARTICLE III – AFFILIATIONS

Any and all affiliations of this church shall be for the purpose of strengthening the bonds of Christian fellowship with churches of like faith and practice. Such affiliation shall be voluntary in nature and entered into or terminated by a majority vote of members present at any duly called business meeting.

ARTICLE IV – STATEMENT OF FAITH

SECTION 1 – THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that the original writings of the Holy Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, were verbally and plerarily inspired of God, were inerrant as originally recorded, and were infallible in their teachings. We believe that copies and faithful translations of the original writings are reliable transmissions of the inspired Word of God, which is the supreme and final authority in all matters of faith and conduct. (II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:20-21; Psalm 19:7-9)

SECTION 2 – GOD

We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, equal in every divine perfection and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption. We believe that the universe and man came into being by direct creation of God and not by evolution. (II Corinthians 13:14; Matthew 28:19; Exodus 20:2-3; Genesis 1 and 2)

A. God the Father

We believe that God the Father is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in a unique way by eternal generation; that by this generative process the divine nature is communicated to the Son in such a way that He is Holy God, as the Father is also Holy God. We believe that God the Father is also the Father of all regenerated persons who by the new birth become members of His family and kingdom. (II Corinthians 1:3; Galatians 3:26; John 1:12, 3:3,5)

B. God the Son

We believe in the eternal pre-existence and deity of the Lord Jesus Christ; that He was virgin-born so as to become fully man while remaining true God; that He shed His blood in death on the cross in substitutionary atonement for our sins; that He arose bodily from the grave and physically ascended to the right hand of God the Father, where He ever lives to make intercession for believers; that all authority is given unto Him; that He is presently building His Church; that He will return in the air to receive the Church unto Himself; that He will come again to the earth

following the Tribulation to establish His millennial kingdom. (John 1:1,14; Luke 1:30-35; Philippians 2:5-11; Matthew 28:18-20)

C. God the Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit, being the third person of the Godhead, convicts individuals of sin; that He calls them to repentance; that He regenerates, indwells, and baptizes believers into the body of Christ; that He seals and sets them apart for a holy life; that He keeps and empowers believers day by day. We believe that He is the teacher of the Word of God and is our guide for daily life. (John 16:7-11; I Corinthians 6:19, 12:13; Ephesians 1:13-14; Titus 3:5; Romans 8:9,26)

SECTION 3 – ANGELS

We believe in the personal existence of angelic beings who remained faithful to God's Word. We believe in the personality and reality of Satan, a fallen angel, who leads a rebellion against God and who is the adversary of God's people; that he was divinely condemned by Jesus' crucifixion and death, was utterly defeated by Jesus' resurrection, and one day will be cast into the Lake of Fire (Hell). We also believe in the personal existence of demons and fallen angels and that they too will be cast into the Lake of Fire. (Matthew 25:41; John 16:11; I Peter 5:8; Hebrews 1:14, 13:2; Revelation 20:10)

SECTION 4 – HUMANITY

We believe that God created humanity in His own spiritual image; that each person, like God, possesses a spirit, an intellect, and a will. We also believe the Scriptural record of the fall of man through Adam's disobedience to God, and that every person by nature is spiritually dead and totally depraved, thus deserving of eternal condemnation. Therefore, we believe that every person needs to be saved (born again spiritually) in order to be reconciled to God. This salvation is the gift of God, given by grace, through faith, when individuals repent of their sin and place their faith in Jesus Christ. We believe that once saved, believers are forever secure in Christ, kept by the power of God, and privileged to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation. (Genesis 1:27; Jeremiah 13:23; John 3:3,16, 10:28-29; Romans 3:23; Ephesians 2:1,8-9; Hebrews 9:12; II Corinthians 5:21)

SECTION 5 – THE CHURCH

A. The Universal Church

We believe in the universal church, which is the body and bride of Christ, and that it is a spiritual organism made up of all born-again persons from Pentecost to the Rapture. (I Corinthians 12:12-14; Ephesians 1:22-23, 5:25-27; Colossians 1:18)

B. The Local Church

The local New Testament church is a body of regenerated, baptized believers, under the headship of Jesus Christ, that is organized, independent, and self-governing. It is the responsibility of the local church to observe the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, to meet for worship and service, to edify itself in love, and to evangelize the world. (Acts 2:41-47, 16:5; Philippians 1:1; I Timothy 3:1-10)

SECTION 6 – ORDINANCES

A. Baptism

We believe that baptism is the immersion in water of a believer in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; that its purpose is to show forth in solemn testimony the believer's faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior; and that it is prerequisite to church membership. (Matthew 28:19; Acts 8:36-39, 10:47-48)

B. Lord's Supper

We believe that the Lord's Supper is a memorial service in which the elements symbolize the broken body and shed blood of Christ at Calvary. The elements are to be taken after solemn self-examination only by believers who are walking in fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. (I Corinthians 11:23-33)

SECTION 7 – FUTURE FULFILLMENT OF PROPHECY

We believe that at death, the spirits and souls of the saved are absent from the body and present with the Lord in Heaven, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection; that at death, the spirits and the souls of the unsaved are in Hades in conscious misery until the second resurrection. (Luke 16:19-31; II Corinthians 5:6-8; Philippians 1:23-24)

We believe in the resurrection of all persons when the body shall be reunited with the soul and spirit. The first resurrection will occur at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in the air for all believers who have died and for those believers who are living at the time of His coming. We believe that this is the next great event in the fulfillment of prophecy, for which we should be constantly looking. (Matthew 24:29-42; John 5:28-29; I Corinthians 15:51-57; I Thessalonians 4:13-17; Titus 2:13)

We believe that after the saved people are taken up to Heaven to be with the Lord, the seven-year tribulation shall occur on earth. It will be a time of terrible judgment for those left on the earth, and the last half of this period will be the Great Tribulation, ending with the battle of Armageddon. (Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15-22; Revelation 6:1 – 19:21)

We believe that the tribulation period will culminate with the return of the Lord Jesus Christ and His saints, who will rule with Him on the earth during the millennial (thousand year) reign. We believe that during this period, Satan will be bound in the abyss and that the curse, which now rests upon the whole creation, will be lifted. We believe that worldwide righteousness will not prevail until this time. (Isaiah 11:9; Micah 4:1-5; Zechariah 14:9; Revelation 20:1-3)

We believe that at the close of the thousand-year reign of Christ on earth, Satan will be loosed and will go out and deceive the nations and cause them to march against Jerusalem and the saints. God will then cause fire to come down upon Satan and his hosts to devour them. Satan will then be cast into the Lake of Fire. (Revelation 20:7-10)

We believe that after the doom of Satan, the second resurrection shall occur. All the bodies of the unsaved shall be resurrected and united with their souls and spirits to appear before God at the Great White Throne Judgment. Every unsaved person (body, soul, and spirit) will be consigned alive to everlasting and conscious punishment in the Lake of Fire. (Revelation 20:11-15)

SECTION 8 – CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY AND GROWTH

We believe that all believers can and should, through the power of the Holy Spirit, live godly lives, separated from sinful practices and triumphing over temptation. We believe that the regenerate should affiliate with a local church, supporting it by regular attendance, by prayer, by service, and by financial support. We believe that Christian service is the Lord's working through His people to build His church by saving the lost and strengthening the saved. (Mark 16:15; Acts 2:47; I Corinthians 16:2; II Corinthians 9:7; Titus 2:11-12; I John 2:15-17)

We believe that every Christian, as a steward who has been entrusted by God with a portion of His wealth, is obligated to financially support the local church. We believe that God has established the tithe as a basis for giving, but that every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully for the support of the church, for the relief of those in need, and for the spread of the Gospel. We believe that a Christian relinquishes all rights to direct the use of the tithe or offering once the gift has been made. (Genesis 14:20; Proverbs 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; I Corinthians 16:2; II Corinthians 9:6-7; Galatians 6:6; Ephesians 4:28; I Timothy 5:17-18; I John 3:17)

We believe that spiritual growth takes place by a process the Bible calls sanctification, whereby the believer is set apart from sin unto Christ. There are three aspects of sanctification. 1) The believer has been set apart positionally as part of God's family the moment he/she believes the Gospel. 2) The believer is being set apart progressively in the daily Christian walk, growing in grace toward the likeness of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit in the continual use of appointed means: the Word of God, self-examination, watchfulness, prayer, and yielding to the Spirit through Biblical change. 3) The believer is to be set apart prospectively from the very presence of sin when his/her sanctification is completed at the coming of Christ for the church. (John 17:17; Romans 8:13, 28-29, 12:1-2; I Corinthians 6:11; II Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 4:11-16, 22, 24; I Thessalonians 3:13, 5:23; II Thessalonians 2:13; I Timothy 4:7; I John 3:2-3; Hebrews 10:10,14; II Peter 3:18)

SECTION 9 – MISSIONS

We believe that God has given the church a great commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations so that there might be a great multitude consisting of believers from every nation, tribe, ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ, we must use all available means to evangelize our neighbors and people of other nations. (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; II Corinthians 5:20)

SECTION 10 – CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe in the separation of church and state, with each believer having responsibility to both. We believe that God has ordained and created three basic institutions of authority: 1) the home, 2) the state, and 3) the church. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and has balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the others. The home, the state, and the church are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. (Matthew 22:21; Romans 13:1-7; Ephesians 5:22-24; Hebrews 13:17; I Peter 2:13-14)

SECTION 11 – POSITIONS ON ISSUES

We believe that it is important to identify ourselves as being fundamental, dispensational, pre-tribulational, pre-millennial, evangelistic, separated, and independent.

We believe that God has designed marriage to be between one man and one woman for life, and that He has designed physical intimacy to be reserved for marriage. Therefore, any other arrangement is not God's design. Saved individuals who are now in compliance with God's design, in spite of their past lifestyle, can be used for God's service. (Genesis 2:24, 19:5,13; Leviticus 18:11-30; Malachi 2:14-17; Matthew 19:3-12; Romans 7:1-3; I Corinthians 5:1, 6:9; I Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4)

We believe that God is the One in charge of all phases of life: conception, birth, life, and death. After prayerful and diligent consideration of the Scriptures, each believer must evaluate human attempts to manipulate these areas. (Job 3:16; Psalms 51:5, 139:14-16; Isaiah 44:24, 49:1,5; Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:44)

We believe that the believer's body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and should be treated with appropriate care. (I Corinthians 3:16, 6:19-20; Philippians 4:8)

We believe that the church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander. We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes. (I Corinthians 6:1-8; Ephesians 4:31-32)

SECTION 12 – AUTHORITY OF STATEMENT OF FAITH

This statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing statement of faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible, and therefore is binding on all members.

ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1 – QUALIFICATIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

To qualify for church membership, a person must give evidence of being born again, must have been baptized by immersion, and must accept and adhere to our constitution and our statement of faith.

SECTION 2 – PROCEDURE FOR MEMBERSHIP

A candidate for membership shall become familiar with the church constitution. Each candidate shall be interviewed by the Deacons, and by the Pastor(s) when possible. A record of the interview shall be retained in the church files. With the recommendation of the Deacons, each person shall be voted upon by the members. A majority vote is required to admit a person to membership. New members shall be publicly welcomed into membership. When appropriate, the church Clerk shall notify any new member's former church of the action taken by this church.

SECTION 3 – RESPONSIBILITIES AND PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP

Each member is responsible to love, honor, and esteem the Pastor(s); to pray for them; and to recognize pastoral authority in spiritual affairs of the church; to cultivate brotherly love for all members of the church; to support the church prayerfully and financially; and to support the beliefs and practices of the church through a life-style based on Biblical principles.

This congregation functions, not as a pure democracy, but as a body under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ and the direction of the Pastor(s) as the under-shepherds, with the counsel of the Deacons. Membership in this church does not provide those individuals with any property, contract, or civil rights based on principles of democratic government. The internal affairs of this church shall be governed exclusively by the church's own rules and procedures.

SECTION 4 – ARBITRATION

Inasmuch as the Scriptures require Christians to take their disputes to the saints and not to the civil courts (I Corinthians 6:1-8), all disputes which may arise (1) between any member of this church and the church itself, or (2) between any member of this church and any Pastor, officer, employee, volunteer, or other member of this church, shall be resolved by binding arbitration if efforts to mediate or conciliate the dispute have failed. Either party to the dispute may initiate the arbitration process by filing with the other party a written request for arbitration within a reasonable time after the dispute has arisen and efforts to mediate or conciliate have failed. In such a case, the member and the church shall each name an arbitrator, and the two so selected shall name a third. All arbitrators must be members in good standing in a church of like faith. The third arbitrator chosen by the other two shall disclose, before accepting the appointment, any financial or personal, family, or social relationships which are likely to affect impartiality or which might reasonably create an appearance of partiality or bias. Either of the parties to the arbitration, on the basis of disclosures, may disqualify such a candidate from serving as the third arbitrator. A third arbitrator who serves without objection from either party has a continuing duty to disclose relationships or interests which may impair his impartiality. Either party, regardless of the stage of the arbitration process, may on the basis of such disclosures disqualify such a person from further participation. The arbitration process shall not proceed until the third arbitrator is selected.

The arbitrators shall appoint the time and place for the hearing and cause notification to the parties to be served personally or by registered mail not less than thirty days before the hearing. Appearance at the hearing waives such notice. The arbitrators may adjourn the hearing from time to time as necessary and, on request of a party and for good cause, or upon their own motion, may postpone the hearing to a later date. The arbitrators may hear and determine the controversy upon the evidence produced notwithstanding the failure of a party duly notified to appear. The parties are entitled to be heard, to present evidence material to the controversy, and to cross-examine witnesses appearing at the hearing. The hearing shall be conducted by all the arbitrators, but a majority of them may determine any question and render a final award. If during the course of the hearing, an arbitrator for any reason ceases to act, he/she shall be replaced in the manner of original selection. The arbitrators may in their absolute discretion admit as evidence any affidavit or declaration concerning the matters in dispute, a copy thereof having been given at least five days previously to the party against whom the same is offered, but the person whose evidence is so

taken shall be subject to cross-examination by such party. The arbitrators shall have the power to order and direct what they shall deem necessary to be done by either of the parties relating to the matters of the dispute. Cost of the arbitration shall be assessed at the discretion of the arbitrators, who may award by and whom they shall be paid. Any submission of a dispute to arbitration shall not be revoked by the death of any party to the dispute, and any award will be binding upon such person's heirs and successors.

The decision of the arbitrators shall be binding on both parties, and both parties submit themselves to the personal jurisdiction of the courts of New York, both state and federal, for the entry of a judgment confirming the arbitrators' award. Any matter not provided for herein shall be governed by the provisions of the Uniform Arbitration Act.

The arbitration process is not a substitute for any disciplinary process set forth in the constitution of the church, and shall in no way affect the authority of the church to investigate reports of misconduct, to conduct hearings, or to administer discipline.

If a dispute may result in an award of monetary damages, then use of this arbitration procedure is conditioned on acceptance of the procedure by the liability insurer of the church, and the insurer's agreement to honor any arbitration award up to any applicable policy limits.

SECTION 5 – TERMINATION OF MEMBERS

The name of a church member shall be removed from the roll upon death, on the written request of the church member, or upon written notification that the member has united with another church or group. No church action is required, but removal must be reported at the next regular business meeting.

Termination of membership shall be by vote of the church upon recommendation of the Deacons with evidence of conduct contrary to or incompatible with the doctrines and practices of the church.

After six months of absence, a member shall be considered inactive and ineligible to vote. An individual's membership shall be automatically terminated if the member in question has not attended a regular worship service of the church in the preceding twelve months. This provision for termination may be waived in the case of any member at the discretion of the Pastor(s) and the Deacons.

ARTICLE VI – DISCIPLINE

SECTION 1 – THE ADMINISTRATION OF DISCIPLINE

There shall be a Discipline Committee consisting of the Pastor(s) and the Deacons. These men shall have the sole authority to determine heretical deviations from the statement of faith and

violations of the church constitution. If a Pastor or a Deacon is the subject of a disciplinary matter, he shall not sit as a member of the Discipline Committee. He shall be subject to the same disciplinary procedures as other church members.

SECTION 2 – THE OBJECTS OF DISCIPLINE

The aims of corrective discipline are the glory of God, the welfare and the purity of the church, and the restoration of the offender.

SECTION 3 – THE REASONS FOR DISCIPLINE

The offenses for which discipline may be administered are conduct of an immoral or scandalous character; flagrant dishonesty; the holding and teaching of heretical opinions; persistent trouble making, especially in the affairs of the congregation; and, in general, whatever conduct is grossly unbecoming a believer in Jesus Christ. (Hebrews 13:7,17)

SECTION 4 – THE MANNER OF DISCIPLINE

Matters of discipline shall be handled in accordance with Biblical guidelines. A member who becomes an offense to the body by reason of unchristian conduct may be confronted (Matthew 18:15-16; Galatians 6:1; I Thessalonians 5:14); brought before the church (Matthew 18:17; II Timothy 2:25); or if necessary, excluded according to II Thessalonians 3:6,14-15. Any position of service shall be suspended pending the outcome of the disciplinary process. In cases where the above methods of discipline fail to bring about correction, the offender shall be dismissed according to the conditions that are set forth under Article V, Section 5. Once a matter of discipline is initiated, a member's resignation will not be accepted until after the issue is settled.

ARTICLE VII – MEETINGS

SECTION 1 – WORSHIP AND INSTRUCTION

Services for the worship of God and the ministry of the Word shall normally be observed every Sunday, usually both morning and evening. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall usually be observed once each month, preferably on the first Sunday. The ordinance of Believer's Baptism shall be observed whenever candidates are qualified.

Sunday School shall normally be held each Sunday, for the purpose of providing instruction in the Word of God. Weekday meetings for prayer and/or Bible study shall be conducted on a regular basis.

Other regular meetings may be conducted for specific groups. Special meetings, such as Bible conferences, missionary conferences, and revivals, may be scheduled as deemed beneficial by the Pastor(s).

SECTION 2 – BUSINESS

The fiscal year shall be January 1st through December 31st. The Annual Church and Corporate Business Meeting shall be held in January. Notice of this meeting shall be announced from the pulpit two successive Sundays prior to the meeting. During the meeting, church (corporate) officers will be elected and the annual budget approved. A printed annual report by officers and

heads of committees shall be prepared and made available to the membership on the Sunday prior to the Annual Meeting. The members will review the annual reports and conduct other business as may properly come before the church.

Quarterly Business Meetings shall be held each year, preferably in April, July, and October. Notice of this meeting shall be announced from the pulpit two successive Sundays prior to the meeting.

Special Announced Business Meetings may be called by the Pastor(s) or the Deacons. Notices of such meetings and the nature of the business to be acted upon shall be given from the pulpit at least one week in advance, at all services prior to the meeting.

Unannounced Business Meetings may be called at any regular service, without prior notification, for the purpose of acting upon matters pertaining to membership or for selecting messengers.

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, shall be the parliamentary guide in all matters of business. A Pastor shall act as moderator of all meetings, except in the case of meetings called to ask for or consider his resignation. In the absence of the Pastor(s), the Chairman of the Deacons or another Deacon shall act as moderator.

To qualify for voting, one must be a regular (not inactive) member at least 18 years of age. All voting must be done in person, and each voter shall have only one vote. Matters of business shall be decided by a majority vote of those members present, unless otherwise indicated.

Those members present at any business meeting called in accordance with the constitution shall constitute a quorum. When calling a Pastor, a quorum shall consist of 50 percent of the qualified members.

ARTICLE VIII – OFFICERS

SECTION 1 – CHURCH OFFICERS

The officers of this church shall be the Pastor(s), the Deacons, the Trustees, the Clerk, the Treasurer of Expenses, and the Treasurer of Receipts. One person may hold two or more offices, except that of Pastor, and the same person cannot serve as Treasurer of Expenses and Treasurer of Receipts. As an accommodation to legal relationships outside the church, the Pastor shall serve as president of the corporation, the Chairman of the Trustees shall serve as vice president of the corporation, the Clerk shall serve as secretary of the corporation, and the Treasurers shall serve jointly as treasurer of the corporation.

All officers of this church shall be elected from the qualified, active, voting members of the church who have held membership for not less than one year. When deemed to be appropriate, the one-year requirement may be waived upon recommendation of the Pastor(s) and the Deacons. The calling of the Pastor is another exception, which is covered in Article VIII, Section 2. All officers are expected to actively participate in the services of the church. The slate of officers shall be presented by the Nominating Committee prior to the Annual Meeting. All officers shall remain in office until their successors have been installed. Annual installation shall be on the first Sunday

following the Annual Meeting, if possible. All church officers shall affirm their agreement with the statement of faith annually in the presence of each other.

Officers shall serve from February 1st to January 31st. The term of service for all offices, except the Pastor(s), shall be three years. Members of the Deacons and of the Trustees shall serve terms with alternating expiration. Elected officers may be re-elected. A vacancy occurring in any office, except the Pastor(s), may be filled at any announced church business meeting.

The corporation shall indemnify any and all persons who may serve or who have served at any time as officers, against any and all expenses, including amounts paid upon judgments, counsel fees, and amounts paid in settlement (before or after suit is commenced) actually and necessarily incurred by such persons in connection with the defense or settlement of any claim, action, suit, or proceeding in which they, or any of them, are made parties, or a party, or which may be asserted against any of them by reason of being or having been officers of the corporation, except in relation to matters as to which any such officer or former officer shall be adjudged in any action, suit, or proceeding to be liable for his/her own negligence or misconduct in the performance of his/her duties. Such indemnification shall be in addition to any other rights to which those indemnified may be entitled under any law, bylaw, agreement, or otherwise.

SECTION 2 – THE SENIOR PASTOR AND THE ASSISTANT PASTORS

A. Office

The candidate, before he is recommended to the church membership and before he is called, shall be required to state in writing and without any mental reservation, his acceptance of and adherence to the statement of faith. He should also state his thoughts in regard to the constitution, and any questions or problems should be considered at that time.

The Senior Pastor shall be chosen by ballot, at a special business meeting called for that purpose. Notice of this meeting shall have been given from the pulpit for two Sundays immediately preceding the meeting. Eighty percent of the ballots cast shall be necessary for the calling of the Senior Pastor. Assistant Pastors shall be elected by voice vote.

The office of the Pastor shall be a continuing office for an indefinite period.

B. Qualifications

The Pastor shall meet the qualifications found in I Timothy 3:1-7. He must be in agreement with the statement of faith of this church.

C. Duties

It shall be the duty of the Pastor(s) to have charge of the spiritual welfare of the church; to preach the Gospel; to administer the ordinances; to preside, when present, over all meetings of the church; to officiate on occasions such as weddings and memorial services; and to tenderly watch over the fold as "overseer of the flock of God" (I Peter 5:2). The Pastor(s) shall have the general oversight of all the ministries of the church.

Any additional Pastoral Staff or paid staff personnel shall be recommended by the Pastor(s) and subject to the approval of the Deacons and of the church membership. The Senior Pastor, having spiritual leadership of the church, will have direction over all associates and staff. The Assistant Pastor(s) shall assist the Senior Pastor in carrying out the ministries of the church.

The Pastor(s), with the help of the Deacons, shall consider and decide upon all pulpit supplies and special pulpit features.

D. Termination

The relationship between the Pastor(s) and the church shall be permanent unless dissolved at the option of either party by giving a month's notice, or less by mutual consent. The severance of the relationship between the Pastor(s) and the church may be considered at any regular church business meeting, provided notice to that effect has been given from the pulpit to the church two successive Sundays prior to said regular church business meeting. A three-fourths majority of the members present and voting shall be required to decide the matter. Disciplinary removal of a Pastor from office automatically terminates his membership.

SECTION 3 – THE DEACONS

A. Office

The Deacons will generally consist of no fewer than six men. At their first meeting following the annual election, they shall elect from their own number a Deacon to act as Chairman, who shall also serve as vice president of the corporation, and a Secretary who shall keep a record of all meetings and business decisions. The Deacons shall not transact official business with less than a majority participating.

B. Qualifications

The Deacons shall be at least twenty-one years of age and shall meet the qualifications of the office as they are listed in Acts 6 and I Timothy 3:8-13. A man who has been divorced or who is married to a spouse who has been divorced shall not serve as a Deacon.

C. Duties

The Deacons shall assist the Pastor(s), in such manner as requested, in promoting the spiritual welfare of the church, in conducting the religious services, and in performing all other work of the church. They shall make provision for the observance of the ordinances of the church. They shall, in conjunction with the Pastor(s), consider applications for church membership. They shall, in cooperation with the Pastor(s), disburse the benevolence fund. They shall assist the Pastor(s) in visitation and in other evangelistic efforts of the church. They shall provide the pulpit supply and act as leaders for church meetings if the office of Pastor is vacant. The Deacons shall assist the Pastor(s) in appointing committees and individuals to manage the church's programs and in caring for the administrative needs of the church's various ministries. At such a time as the pulpit becomes vacant, the Deacons and those approved by the congregation shall serve as a Pulpit Committee, implementing policy that has been previously written by the Deacons.

D. Cessation of Office

A Deacon shall cease to serve upon the acceptance of his resignation or upon his dismissal by vote of the membership. The Pastor(s) or the Deacons may recommend dismissal when there is evidence of a Deacon's failure to properly discharge his responsibilities, or when the officer's conduct or belief is in clear violation of Scripture and of the principles set forth in this constitution.

SECTION 4 – THE TRUSTEES

The Trustees shall be elected according to the laws for Baptist churches in the State of New York and shall consist of no fewer than three people. They shall be given areas of responsibility from the Pastor(s) and the Deacons and shall be accountable to them. The Trustees shall maintain responsibility for the church as a corporation according to the laws for Baptist churches in the State of New York.

The Trustees shall judiciously manage the assets and liabilities of the church and shall oversee all the finances of the church. Major expenses and capital projects require approval of the congregation.

SECTION 5 – THE CLERK

As directed by the church, the Clerk shall keep records of church proceedings, of the membership roll, of all baptisms, of certificates of ordination, and of licenses and commissions. The Clerk shall also file pertinent documents, papers, and letters received during the term of office. All records are to be kept on church premises and delivered to the successor upon leaving office. The Clerk shall keep an account of any special events in the life of the church that are of historical interest and shall give a report at the annual church business meeting of the status of the church membership roll in the past year. The Clerk shall also serve as the secretary of the corporation.

SECTION 6 – THE TREASURERS

The Treasurer of Receipts and the Treasurer of Expenses must each be at least twenty-one years of age. The Pastor(s) and the Trustees shall appoint an assistant for each Treasurer. The Treasurer of Receipts shall account for all funds contributed to the church, and the Treasurer of Expenses shall disburse the funds as ordered by the church. The Treasurers shall generate a monthly report. A written report of itemized disbursements shall be presented at the quarterly church business meetings, and a general report for the year shall be presented at the annual church business meeting. All expenditures of the church, except miscellaneous petty cash disbursements, shall be paid by check. Within fourteen days of retirement or removal from office, the Treasurer(s) shall deliver to the new Treasurer(s) or to the Chairman of the Deacons all records used in the office as Church Treasurer. The Treasurer's books shall be audited annually. The Treasurer of Receipts and the Treasurer of Expenses shall jointly serve as treasurer of the corporation.

SECTION 7 – DUTIES OF ALL OFFICERS

All officers shall prepare a written report of their work for the annual church business meeting and shall surrender any records in their possession to the Clerk at the close of their term of office to be filed as a permanent record of the work of the church. All records are the property of the church and must be kept on church premises.

Any officer who neglects his/her duties as outlined in the constitution may, at the discretion of the Pastor(s) and the Deacons, be removed from office, and another officer may be appointed to serve the unexpired term.

ARTICLE IX – REGULATION AND FORMATION OF INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONS

SECTION 1 – ESTABLISHMENT

Organizations within the church, such as Sunday School, AWANA, Ladies Missionary Fellowship, Youth Group, Athletic Teams, and Choirs, shall be established upon the recommendation of the Pastor(s) and the Deacons.

The Pastor(s), with consultation and consent from the Deacons, may appoint members to committees and organizations to facilitate the ministry of the church. Each committee and organization is under the supervision of the Pastor(s) and the Deacons, and is responsible for appointing its own Chairperson and Secretary, for reviewing and revising its own guidelines, and for submitting appropriate reports. Members appointed to positions shall serve for one year, after which they may be reappointed.

SECTION 2 – BUSINESS

No organization of the church may carry on business or adopt any practice that is contrary to the constitution of the church.

SECTION 3 – EQUIPMENT

Any equipment or teaching aids purchased with special gifts or church funds for the use of any church organization shall be considered church property.

ARTICLE X – TAX-EXEMPT PROVISIONS

SECTION 1 – PRIVATE INUREMENT

No part of the net earnings of the church shall inure to the benefit of or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for the services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article I, Section 2.

SECTION 2 – POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

No substantial part of the activities of the church shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. The church shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

SECTION 3 – DISSOLUTION

Upon the dissolution of the church, the Trustees shall, after paying or making provision for payment of all the liabilities of the church, dispose of all the assets of the church to such organization(s) formed and operated exclusively for religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law), as the Trustees shall determine. Assets may be distributed only to organizations which agree with the church's statement of faith.

SECTION 4 – RACIAL NONDISCRIMINATION

The church shall have a racially nondiscriminatory policy and therefore shall not discriminate against members, applicants, students, and others on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, or national origin.

ARTICLE XI – FINANCIAL POLICY AND DESIGNATED CONTRIBUTIONS

SECTION 1 – FINANCIAL POLICY

It shall be the policy of the church to provide for the regular support of its work through voluntary contributions. All monies from interest, from the sale of property, or from any other source shall be used exclusively in the ministry of the church.

SECTION 2 – DESIGNATED CONTRIBUTIONS

From time to time the church, in the exercise of its religious, educational, and charitable purposes, may establish various funds to accomplish specific goals. Contributors may suggest other uses for their contributions, but all suggestions shall be deemed advisory rather than mandatory in nature. No fiduciary obligation shall be created by any designated contribution made to the church other than to use the contribution for the general furtherance of any of the purposes stated in Article I, Section 2.

ARTICLE XII – AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be revised or amended by a majority vote of the members present and voting at any regular church business meeting, provided that said revision or amendment has been submitted in writing and announced from the pulpit for two successive Sundays prior to the vote.

ADOPTION

This constitution was adopted by a majority vote of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting of the church. This constitution supersedes all previous constitutions of The West Windsor Baptist Church.

January 2022

1-23-22
Date

Lindsey Snavelly
Clerk