



MYERSTOWN
CHRISTIAN
FELLOWSHIP

CONSTITUTION

(Rev. 10/2020)

Constitution of Myerstown Christian Fellowship

(Rev. 01/19)

Introduction

This constitution is established to declare our purpose, statement of faith and ensure that this body may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the teachings of scripture

Text

Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

Ephesians 2:20,21 (ESV)

Article 1 – Name

This body shall be known as Myerstown Christian Fellowship (MCF) of Myerstown, Lebanon County, Pennsylvania

Article 2 – Purpose

Section 1 - Mission Statement

Helping People Know, Follow, and Share Jesus

Section 2 - Five Biblical Purposes of the Church

Worship - we exist to glorify God (John 4:24)

Fellowship - we exist to establish a relationship with God and other believers (Acts 2:42)

Discipleship - we exist to aspire to become like Christ (Matthew 28:20)

Ministry - we exist to commit to ministry in the body of Christ (Matt47hew 20:28)

Evangelism - we exist to evangelize the world (John 20:21)

Article 3 - Statement of Faith

The following statements we believe to be a summary of those doctrines which are essential to the practice and propagation of true Biblical Christianity, and therefore are held by this church.

Section 1 - The Scriptures

The Bible, both Old and New Testaments, is the written Word of God, and the supreme and sole authority of Christian faith and practice. The Scriptures were originally given through the Holy Spirit by plenary, verbal inspiration, infallibly true and free of error. No other writings, experiences, or traditions of any kind are inspired in this sense. God in His power has divinely preserved His Word. (II Timothy 3:16, 17; II Peter 1:19-21)

Section 2 - The Nature of God

The only true and living God is a Triune God, eternally existing in three persons, - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Father is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, the Creator and Ruler of all things. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God, equally divine and eternal with the Father, and is also the Son of Man, truly human but without sin. The Holy Spirit is a Person, one with the Father and Son in the Godhead, whose work it is to glorify God in Christ through convicting men of sin and regenerating those who believe on Him.

(Genesis 17:1; Exodus 20:2-3; Psalm 90:2; John 4:24; I Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 4:6; John 1:1; Ephesians 4:4-6)

Section 3 - The Nature of Man

Man is created in the image of God for the purpose of mutual love and fellowship between him and his Creator. Though created in the image of God, man willfully sinned against God, bringing sin and death into the world. Through Adam, all men have inherited a sin-nature. Therefore, all men are guilty sinners, under the just condemnation of a Holy God.

(Genesis 1:26,27; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:10-19; Romans 5:12, 19; Galatians 3:22; Ephesians 2:1-3)

Section 4 - Satan

We believe that Satan is a personal being, the author of sin and the Father of lies. He is the declared enemy of God and man and shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire.

(Isaiah 14:12-15; Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10).

Section 5 - The Work of Christ

The eternal Son became flesh in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He was the promised Messiah fulfilling the Old Testament prophecies. He lived a sinless human life, perfectly fulfilling the divine law, and then offered Himself as a sacrifice for the sins of every man. He died on the Cross, shedding His precious blood, in full substitution and atonement for the sins of all men everywhere. He was buried, and on the third day He arose bodily from the dead, alive forevermore. He later ascended bodily into Heaven where, at the right hand of the Father, He now continually intercedes for those who put their trust in Him.

(Romans 3:24; II Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 12:2; I Peter 3:18)

Section 6 - Salvation

Salvation is a gift offered by grace received through repentance of sin and faith in Jesus death,

burial and resurrection. Salvation is the gift of eternal life and is found in Jesus alone. God initiates, sustains and finishes salvation in the life of the believer therefore it cannot be lost or taken away.

(Mark 1:15; Eph. 2:8,9; Acts 4:12; Hebrews 12:2)

Section 7 - Creation

We believe in the Genesis account of creation, and that it is to be accepted literally, and not allegorically or figuratively; that man was created directly in God's own image and after His own likeness; that man's creation was not a matter of evolution.

(Genesis 1:1; John 1:3; Acts 17:28; Colossians 1:16,17)

Section 8 - The Church

The church is the body of Christ composed of all believers everywhere. The scriptures teach that the church universal should be organized into local churches. We believe that the local church should be an independent, self-governing congregation of Scripturally baptized believers, united in Christ's love, and covenanted together to observe the ordinances of Christ, to exercise the gifts and privileges given to them in the Word of God, and to carry out the great commission.

(Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:41-47; Ephesians 1:22, 23)

Section 9 - Ordinances

We recognize two ordinances of the church of this age: The Lord's Supper and Water Baptism by immersion. They are not to be regarded as a means of salvation.

1) The Lord's Supper - an act of remembrance consisting of the bread and cup which represent the body and blood of Christ. Those who have accepted Christ and are walking in obedience with the Lord are encouraged to join in this ordinance (1 Cor 11:17-34)

2) Water Baptism - a public declaration of an individual's faith in Christ. When administered by this Church, baptism shall be by immersion at the request of those who have personally acknowledged Christ as Savior. (Acts 8:36-39)

Section 10 - The Ministry and Spiritual Gifts

For the purpose of winning the lost and strengthening believers, the Holy Spirit bestows His spiritual gifts on members of the body according to His own will. Speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles were used to authenticate the early church and gradually passed away as the New Testament was completed. We believe that God does hear and answer prayer, including prayer for the sick and afflicted, according to His own will.

(1 Cor 12:4-11; Romans 12:6-8; 1 Cor 13:8-10)

Section 11 - Death and Resurrection

Death is a reality which all of us as human beings face. Our mortality is a result of sin and God's judgement. At the moment of one's death their soul is separated from their physical bodies. Believers are immediately taken to be with the Lord. Unbelievers are immediately taken to a place of suffering and punishment. This disembodied state is a temporary situation until the

resurrection when everyone will eventually be reunited with their new bodies to be judged. (Heb 9:27; 2 Cor 5:6-8; Phil 1:21-23; 1 Cor 15:51-58)

Section 12 - The Promised Return of Christ and Last Things

We believe in the personal, imminent return of our Lord for His saints. When the Lord Jesus Christ returns both dead and living believers will be caught up to meet Him. They will receive their resurrection bodies and will appear before the judgement seat of Christ to be judged not for salvation but for rewards. The coming of Christ will begin a period of tribulation in which God will pour out His wrath in judgement of mankind's rejection of Christ. Then Christ will come to the earth in power and glory to reign for a thousand years. Following the Millennium, the unsaved will be judged.

(1 Thess. 4:13-18; Matt 24:27; Rev 20:11-15; John 5:22; II Corinthian 5:10)

Section 13 - Heaven and Hell

Heaven is the eternal dwelling place of God and the believer. It is a place of perfect joy, peace and fellowship with God prepared for all believers in Jesus. Hell is the place of eternal conscious punishment of those who reject Christ and die in their sin. It is the eternal destiny of Satan and his demons.

(John 14:1-3; Rev 20:11-15; Rev 20:10)

Section 14 - Other Teachings of Scripture

With respect to issues not addressed each believer is at liberty to believe and practice in accordance with his own conscience and understanding of scripture. This same liberty should be granted to others in the church with the purpose of keeping the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

(Ephesians 4:3)

Article 4 – Membership

Section 1 – Qualifications

The qualifications for membership are

- 1) Profession of faith in Jesus as Savior
 - 2) Scriptural baptism
 - 3) Have read and will abide by statement of faith and constitution
 - 4) Completion of membership class
 - 5) No outside membership's or affiliations that contradict the teachings of the Bible
- Those who meet the above qualifications may enter into membership upon recommendation of the Pastor to the congregation during a regularly scheduled worship service of MBC.

Section 2 - Duties and Rights

Members are expected to be faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian life; and to

faithfully attend the services of the church. They are expected to give regularly for its support and its causes as well as to reflect a servant's heart as they share in its work. Members 18 years and older may act and vote in the transactions and business meetings of the church. (1 Cor. 15:58)

Page | 6

Section 3 – Terms of Membership

Members that pass away or desire removal will be removed from the church membership. Members showing indifference in attendance and support of the church for an extended amount of time will be subject to review for removal of membership. Should a member be known to be living in open unrepentant sin that is damaging the name of Christ or intentionally causing division in the church, the principles of Matthew 18:15-17 will be followed by the Pastors and Deacons. The purpose of this process is to restore the member to fellowship with Christ and the body. If the member remains unrepentant, at the discretion of the Pastors and Deacons, they will be removed from the membership.

Article 5 – Officers

The general officers of this church shall be

- 1) Pastors
- 2) Deacons
- 3) Clerk
- 4) Treasurer
- 5) Assistant Treasurer

Other officers may be elected by the church as required.

Pastors

Section 1 – Calling of the Pastor

A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs or one is determined to be needed by the pastors and deacons. A search committee will be selected by the pastors and deacons to seek out and recommend a candidate that fulfills the NT requirements to the congregation. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one candidate at a time. An affirmative vote of 75% (or more at the discretion of the church leadership) at a duly called business meeting shall be necessary for approval of the candidate. (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9)

Section 2 – Duties of the Pastor

It shall be the duty of the pastor(s) to conduct worship services, preach God's Word, spiritually shepherd the people and provide oversight of all ministry and church activity. (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-3)

A. The pastor shall be given two weeks' vacation with pay during the first four years of service; after five years three weeks with pay; after ten years of service four weeks'

vacation with pay. Each year a maximum of one-week unused vacation may be carried over to the next year. All vacation must be submitted ahead of time to the church secretary for tracking and preparation

B. Pastor(s) shall have the liberty to preach outside the church two Sunday's each year.

C. Pastor(s) may request additional days to preach in other churches. These requests will be reviewed by the Deacon board, and will require a majority vote.

D. In case of the absence of a regular pastor the preaching duties shall be assigned and

E. reimbursement decided by the deacons

Section 3 – Pastoral Structure

The Senior Pastor shall have authority over all assistant pastors and staff

Section 4 – Dismissal of the Pastor

A pastor may be dismissed from the church if after receiving a full and fair hearing at a duly called business meeting. An affirmative vote of 75% is required for his dismissal. At the discretion of the deacons, pastors may be put on a paid suspension of their duties until dismissal is voted on at a duly called business meeting. Both Pastor and the church will give thirty days' notice upon termination of duties unless otherwise mutually agreed upon.

Deacons

Section 1 – Qualifications

The qualifications necessary to become a deacon are listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. Candidates must be regular members of the church for at least one year prior to election.

Section 2 – Election

Deacons shall be nominated by the nominating committee for approval by the Pastors and Deacons. Upon the approval of leadership, the candidates are presented to the congregation for election at a duly called business meeting. Candidates will require an affirmative vote of 75% to be elected as deacons. (Acts 6:3)

Section 3 – Term

The term for serving as a deacon shall be 3 years. Deacons may serve for two consecutive terms. After serving for two consecutive terms, deacons shall be required to wait one year to be eligible for re-election to serve additional terms.

Section 4 – Duties

The role of the deacon outlined in the New Testament is to be a servant to the church. They along with the pastor(s) are responsible for the overall welfare of the church which includes administering the ordinances, maintaining church discipline, promoting harmony and administration. They are responsible for the financial oversight of the church, the care of the church property and the handling of the benevolent fund. Annually they will prepare a budget to be approved by the congregation at a duly called business meeting. The budget will require an affirmative vote of 75% for approval. Any expenditures not on a previously approved budget

or contract may be authorized by a majority approval of the deacons. The deacons while responsible for the care of the church property shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without a specific vote of the church authorizing such action. Any title or titles to property of the church shall be in the name of the church not any individual deacons or pastors. The deacons shall elect their own officers and the chairman shall serve for a term of one year and shall not serve consecutive terms. The chairman of the deacons shall serve as a member of all pastoral search committees as they are needed.

Clerk

The clerk shall be annually nominated by the nominating committee, approved by the leadership and elected by the congregation with an affirmative vote of 75% at a duly called business meeting. The clerk shall keep all records of all business meetings, maintain a church membership roll and conduct all correspondence of the church pertaining to membership. If the clerk is not properly performing his/her duties they may be removed from office at the discretion of leadership. Upon termination of office the clerk shall return all books, files and papers relating to their office.

Treasurer

The treasurer shall be nominated by the nominating committee, approved by the leadership and elected by the congregation with an affirmative vote of 75% at a duly called business meeting. The treasurer shall be elected to serve a 3 year term. The Treasurer may serve for 3 consecutive terms. After serving for 3 consecutive terms, the treasurer shall be required to wait one year to be eligible for re-election to serve additional terms. The treasurer shall have oversight of all financial transactions and accounts of the church. In coordination with the leadership they are responsible for the day to day financial transactions of the church including bills, staff salaries, and approved ministry expenditures. Questions about bills/expenditures are to be directed to ministry leaders and leadership for final approval. All money received shall be collected, counted and deposited according to our money counting policy. The treasurer shall make a detailed financial report submitted monthly to leadership and annually to the congregation at a duly called business meeting. If the treasurer is not properly performing his/her duties they may be removed from office at the discretion of leadership.

Assistant Treasurer(s)

Assistant treasurer(s) shall be nominated by the nominating committee, approved by the leadership and elected by the congregation with an affirmative vote of 75% at a duly called business meeting. An assistant treasurer shall be elected to serve a 3-year term. . The Assistant Treasurer may serve for 3 consecutive terms. After serving for 3 consecutive terms, the treasurer shall be required to wait one year to be eligible for re-election to serve additional terms Their primary duty is to assist the treasurer and complete the treasurer's duties in the event of their absence or inability. If the assistant treasurer is not properly performing his/her duties, they may be removed from office at the discretion of leadership.

Article 6 – Appointees

The appointees of the church shall be

1. Trustees
2. Nominating Committee
3. Sunday School Superintendent

Trustees

Trustees shall be appointed by the leadership and serve a one-year term. There are no term limits for trustees and they may serve in consecutive terms. They shall assist the deacons in the care of all church buildings, parsonages and property. They are to work under the direction of the leadership of the assigned Deacon.

Nominating Committee

The nominating committee shall consist of three members annually appointed by the Pastor and approved by leadership for a term of one year. Their duty is to present qualified nominees to serve as officers of the church. The nominees are then approved by the Pastor and Deacons and then elected by the congregation at a duly called business meeting. One member of leadership shall sit in on all nominating committee meetings as a liaison.

Superintendent of Sunday School

The Superintendent of Sunday School shall be appointed by the pastor. They shall have general oversight of the entire Sunday School program, and shall administer its affairs under the direction of the pastor. He/she shall actively research the best methods and curriculum available and, with the approval of the pastor, administer them in the Sunday School programs. He/she shall develop programs to recruit and train qualified teachers. He/she shall make a written report of the programs and progress of the Sunday School on an annual basis.

Article 7 – Staff Members

All other staff members and employees shall be hired/terminated at the discretion of leadership. They are under the direction of the Pastor(s) and leadership.

Article 8 – Business Meetings

An annual business meeting shall be held each year in January. The fiscal year closes December 31st. Additional business meetings may be called by leadership whenever deemed necessary. A duly called business meeting requires at least 2 weeks prior notice. It shall publicly be announced in the 2 prior Sunday Morning services and promoted through all other channels of church communication. All members 18 years of age and older in attendance and voting at any

duly called business meeting of the church shall be considered a quorum. All business calling for a vote, unless specified otherwise by leadership or elsewhere in the constitution, will require an affirmative vote of 75% of those eligible members present and voting, for approval.

Article 9 – Disposition of the Church Property

In the event of dissolution of Myerstown Christian Fellowship, the Board of Deacons shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the corporation, dispose of all the assets of the corporation in such manner, or to such organizations organized exclusively for charitable, educational, or religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as exempt organizations under section 01 (C0 (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Board of Deacons shall determine. Any church assets not so disposed of shall be disposed by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the principal office of the corporation or organization is then located, exclusively for such purposes as said court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

Article 10 – Marriage

Introduction

This is a positional statement on Myerstown Christian Fellowship's beliefs concerning marriage and the necessary application of this belief to life and practice.

What we believe about marriage

We believe, based on the teaching of the Scriptures in both the Old and New Testaments, that marriage is an institution ordained by God from the foundation of the world, and intended as a lifelong union of one man and one woman (***sex as determined at birth***).

This idea is supported by the account of creation in Genesis chapters 1 and 2. Genesis 1:26-28 teaches that God created man in His own image, both male and female. Genesis chapter 2 provides a more detailed account in which God created the first man, Adam, and decided that it was not good for him to be alone (Genesis 2:18). God indicated that He would make "a suitable helper for him" so he created the first woman, Eve. Together they were man and wife and had "no shame" or sin in their union with each other (Genesis 2:15-25). We believe this passage of scripture is foundational to defining humanity and the institution of marriage.

The Lord Jesus reaffirmed the teaching of the Old Testament when He said, as recorded in Matthew 19:4-6, "Haven't you read, he replied, that at the beginning the Creator made them male and female and said for this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and the two will become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

The Apostle Paul states in Ephesians 5:22-32 that marriage is a unique divine metaphor that illustrates the union of Christ and the church. For this reason also, only a union between a man and a woman can be a proper marriage because a union between two men, two women, or one man and multiple women or any collection of people could not properly illustrate the

relationship between Christ and His church.

Church and Pastoral Policy

Our church follows what the authoritative Word of God, the Bible, reveals as the "sure foundation" of the teachings of Jesus Christ and his apostles (Matthew 7:24-29, I Corinthians 14:37, 2 Tim. 3:16,17). Though we strive to live peaceably with all people and to obey legitimate government authority, in instances involving matters as foundational as marriage, we must ultimately obey God rather than man if the two come into conflict (Acts 5:27-29). In accordance with the statements above the facilities of this church may only be used for marriage ceremonies that approve, honor, and support the Biblical definition of marriage. As a divinely created institution we believe that the marriage ceremony is a sacred worship service. No Pastor or member of the church staff shall officiate at any ceremony which does not adhere to Biblical marriage.

Article 11 – Amendments

The constitution may be amended by the leadership and requires an affirmative vote of 75% at a duly called business meeting. The proposed amendments must be made public at least two weeks before the business meeting. When necessary the entire constitution may be rewritten and submitted for approval using the same procedure used for amendments.

Article 12 – Miscellaneous

Any and all issues not specifically covered in the constitution shall be handled at the discretion of the leadership. All instances of "leadership" and/or "church leadership" in the constitution is referring to the Pastors and Deacons of the church.

Amendment to the Myerstown Christian Fellowship Constitution

On October 18, 2020, the Myerstown Baptist Church membership approved a motion to amend the constitution to allow for a church name change.

There were a total of thirty-nine "YES" votes and eleven "NO" votes. The motion passed with 78% approval.

The name, as such, shall be determined at a later date.