

Abundant Life Southern Baptist Church of Kingsford MI

Constitution

ARTICLE I – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. General.

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist Church. The membership retains unto itself the right of exclusive self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this Church.

While committees, boards, officers and employees may be appointed or hired who will be authorized to make decisions for the Church, the membership retains full ability to govern itself and may overturn any choice made by majority vote at a proper (either regular or special per *article 5 section 3*) business meeting.

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this Church and the conditions of such membership.

The membership of this Church shall be all whose names are duly inscribed on the Church Rolls.

The membership entitled to vote shall consist of all resident members and those members who fully support the Church, and who attend regular scheduled services at least occasionally. Failure to attend for more than 18 consecutive months will result in loss of voting privileges. Voting privileges will be reinstated after attending three (3) service in a two (2) month time and upon request from the individual.

Section 2. Candidacy.

Any person may offer himself as a candidate for membership in this Church. All such candidates shall be presented to the Church at any regular service or meeting, for membership in any of the following ways:

1. By profession of Faith and for Baptism according to the policies of this Church.
2. By Promise of a letter from a Baptist Church of like faith and order having been baptized by immersion into the fellowship of a Baptist Church or the commitment to be baptized.
3. By Restoration upon a statement of prior conversion experience and prior Scriptural baptism (or a commitment to be baptized) by immersion, when no letter is obtainable.

It shall be voted on by a showing of hands. Majority carries the motion.

Should there be any strong objection as to any candidate, such strong objections shall be referred to the Pastor and the Deacons (once deacons have been ordained into the Church) for investigation and the making of a recommendation to the Church within thirty (30) days. A 90% vote of those members present and voting shall be required to elect such candidates to membership.

Section 3. Termination of Membership.

The continuance of membership shall be subject to the principles and usages of the Baptist Churches, and especially as follows:

1. Any member in good and regular standing who desires a letter of dismissal and recommendation to another Baptist Church is entitled to receive it upon request through his new Church. In case of removal to another community, he should promptly make such request. Under special circumstances, letters may be granted to individuals after investigation by deacons and recommendation to the Church for action.
2. If a member in good standing requests in writing to the Church to be released from his covenant obligations to this Church for reasons which the Church may finally deem satisfactory, after it shall have patiently and kindly endeavored to secure his continuance in its fellowship, such requests may be granted, and his membership terminated. Notification of Church action shall be sent to the person(s) requesting termination.
3. The Church may also, after due notice and after effort to make such action unnecessary, terminate the membership of a member who has become inactive in attendance and support of the Church for a period in excess of two years, (unless Providentially hindered from attendance by age, sickness, or other like circumstances). Such action will be taken only upon recommendation of the Pastor or deacons (once ordained) and after approval by two-thirds vote of the membership present at the meeting following the one at which the recommendation is presented.
4. Should a member become an offense to the Church and to its good name by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct, or by persistent breach of his covenant vows, the Church may terminate his membership, but only after due notice and hearing and after faithful efforts have been made to bring such member to repentance and amendment.
5. Membership of persons who join a Church not of like faith shall be terminated when we have been assured of such action.
6. If membership has not been transferred within two years of moving from our area, the name shall be placed on an inactive (not non-resident) membership list. A letter requesting transfer from another Church will be answered by quoting this paragraph and stating that the person is a member of our Church, but was placed on an inactive list for non-participation.
7. All requests for termination of membership, or action looking thereto, (except letter requests from Churches of like faith or not of like faith), shall be first considered by the deacons, who will make recommendations to the Church. The membership of no person shall be terminated (except by letter requests) at the meeting when the recommendation is made, but shall be acted upon at the next regular business meeting. A complete record shall be kept of all such actions taken by the Church.

Section 4. Restoration.

Any person whose membership has been terminated for any offense in accordance with *Section 3, subparagraph 4* above may be restored by vote of the Church, upon satisfactory evidence of his repentance and reformation; or, if on account of continued absence, upon satisfactory explanation after review by Pastor.

ARTICLE II – CHURCH OFFICERS

Section 1. Officers.

The officers of this Church shall be a pastor and other Church staff as needed, deacons, trustees, Church clerk, treasurer and other such officers as may be required for the work of the Church in any of its departments or organizations.

Section 2. Pastor.

(1) Election and Term of Service.

- a. Whenever a vacancy occurs, a pastor shall be called by the Church to serve until the relationship is dissolved at the request of either the pastor or the Church. In either case, at least thirty (30) days notice of termination of the relationship shall be given, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon, with both pastor and the Church seeking to follow the will of God and the leadership of the Holy Spirit.
- b. The call of the pastor shall take place at a meeting called especially for that purpose. Such meeting shall immediately follow a Sunday morning service. At least one week's advance notice of such meeting shall be given the membership by pulpit announcement.
- c. The election shall be upon recommendation of the Pulpit Committee. This committee shall seek out and nominate as pastor a minister of the Gospel, whose Christian character and qualifications fit him for the office of pastor of this Church. The committee shall bring only one name at a time for consideration of the Church and no nominations shall be made from the floor. Election shall be by ballot with an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present and voting, necessary to fill the office. Should the one recommended by the committee fail to receive the required majority, the committee will be instructed to seek out another minister, and the meeting shall be adjourned without debate.

(2) Duties.

The pastor shall have in charge the welfare and oversight of the Church, he shall be an ex-officio member of all organizations, departments and committees; he shall conduct religious services on stated and special occasions, administer the ordinances, minister to members of the Church and community and perform other duties that usually pertain to that office. He shall have special charge of the pulpit ministry of the Church and shall, in cooperation with the deacons, provide for pulpit supply when he is absent, and shall arrange for workers to assist in revival meetings and other special services. The pastor shall preside at all meetings of the Church, except as otherwise provided in the Bylaws. He shall be the administrative head of the Church. He will review all teaching materials for his approval, and be the overseer of all ministries of the Church.

Section 3. Church Staff and Other Employees.

(1) Selection and Expectations

- a. This Church shall call or employ such staff members as the Church shall need. Assistant or associate pastor, minister of education, minister of music, Church secretary, and the like, shall be recommended to the Church and employed by Church action. The primary responsibility of such staff members shall be to serve with the pastor in the spiritual ministry and life of the Church.
- b. The pastor and staff will be very aware for those men of high moral character and mature in Christ. Men who meet the requirements of 1 Timothy 3:8-12 for deacons shall meet with the pastor, for the purpose of determining if that man should be brought before the membership to be voted on for deacon candidacy (the vote must be 75% in favor). If the vote is carried the man will go to an ordination ceremony to be considered for ordination as a deacon.
- c. A deacon will serve so long as he is in good standing.

(2) Duties.

- a. In accordance with the meaning of the work and practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the Church. They are to be zealous to guard the unity of the spirit within the Church, in the bonds of peace.
- b. They shall serve as a council of advice and conference with the pastor in all matters pertaining to the welfare and work of the Church. With the pastor, they are to consider and formulate plans for the constant effort and progress of the Church in all things pertaining to the saving of souls, the development of Christians and the extension and growth of the Kingdom of God.
- c. By proper organization and method among themselves, they are to establish and maintain personal fraternal relations with, and inspiring oversight of all the membership of the Church. Especially are they to seek to know the physical needs and the moral and spiritual struggles of the brethren and sisters; and to serve the whole Church in relieving, encouraging and developing all who are in need.
- d. In counsel with the pastor, and by such methods as the Holy Spirit may direct in accordance with the New Testament teachings, they are to have oversight of the discipline of the Church, in administering which, they are to be guided by the principles set forth in Matthew 18:15-17, I Corinthians 5:9-13 and I Thessalonians 5:12-14. The deacons shall be free to call upon any active member of the Church to aid in disciplinary action.
- e. They shall, in the temporary absence of the pastor, have charge of the prayer meeting and of supplying the pulpit. In any period when the Church is without a pastor, they shall arrange the temporary ministry and take counsel with the pulpit committee with reference to securing a pastor.
- f. The deacons shall be responsible for the preparation and service of the Lord's Supper.

Section 5. Moderator.

The moderator shall be the pastor. In the absence of the pastor, the chairman of the deacons shall preside; or in the absence of both, the clerk shall call the Church to order and a moderator pro tem shall be elected.

Section 6. Clerk or Secretary.

The Church shall elect annually a Church Clerk/Secretary. The clerk of the Church shall keep in a suitable book a record of all the actions of the Church, except as otherwise herein provided. They shall keep a register of the names of members, with dates of admission, dismissal or death, together with a record of baptisms. He shall also notify all officers, members of committees, and delegates of their election or appointment. He shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the Church, preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give legal notice of all meetings where such notice is necessary, as indicated in these bylaws. The clerk shall consider it a part of his responsibility to promote loyalty and efficiency in Church life.

Section 7. Treasurer.

The Pastor and or his wife may not serve in this position. The Church shall elect annually a Church treasurer. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive and pay out, upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel, all money, or thing of value paid or given to the Church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. Payment of bills for local work and expenses shall be made promptly by check. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the Church

at each regular quarterly meeting an itemized report of receipts and disbursements for the preceding month, and this report shall be read to the Church in its regular monthly business meeting. Within thirty (30) days after the end of each fiscal year, the treasurer shall render to the deacons and to the Church an annual report showing the total amount of receipts and an itemized statement of all disbursements. Prior to the rendition of this annual report, upon its completion by the treasurer, the report shall be audited by the trustees, and their signatures placed at the end of the report before it shall be accepted by the Church. All books, records, and accounts kept by the treasurer shall be considered the property of the Church, with the exception of the individual contribution records and these are opened only to the person concerned, the treasurer, the pastor and the chairman of deacons.

Upon rendering the annual account at the end of each fiscal year, and its acceptance and approval by the Church, the same shall be delivered by the treasurer to the Church clerk, who shall keep and preserve it as a part of the permanent records of the Church. The treasurer shall consider it a part of his responsibility to promote in every proper way scriptural giving on the part of the entire membership of the Church. The duties of the Financial Secretary shall be the responsibility of the treasurer unless the situation calls for the election of a Financial Secretary.

ARTICLE III – CHURCH COMMITTEES

When committees are deemed necessary, the board will recommend members to the membership to be voted on. Anyone can make recommendations to the board as to who could be considered.

ARTICLE IV – EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES

Section 1. General.

All organizations of the Church shall be under Church control, all officers being elected by the Church and reporting regularly to the Church through the pastor unless otherwise designated.

ARTICLE V – MEETINGS

Section 1. Worship Services.

The Church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning (and in time, Sun. evening, and each Wednesday evening) for preaching, instructing evangelism and for the worship of Almighty God, such meetings being open for the entire membership of the Church and for all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor.

Section 2. Regular Business Meeting.

Regular business meetings shall be held quarterly on the first Sunday. Should there be any unusual business or matter of unusual interest to be brought before such regular meetings, the membership shall be notified.

At the annual business meeting in the 3rd quarter the Church shall, among other things, nominate and elect volunteer workers needed for the Church organizations.

A special business meeting may be called as needed.

Section 3. Notice of Certain Meetings.

Notice of all called business meetings of the Church shall be given by announcement in regular worship

services of the Church prior to the meeting, unless the Chairman of the Deacons and the Pastor shall agree that extreme urgency renders such notice impracticable.

Section 4. Annual Business Meeting.

The annual business meeting of this Church shall be on the day of the regular 3rd quarter business meeting each year. Notice of this meeting shall be given to the membership at each regular service for the two (2) weeks immediately preceding the meeting. The main items for consideration shall be in the final notice. Among the items to be considered by the Church at its annual business meeting shall be the following:

1. Any pertinent reports to be made such as the financial report.
2. Election of Church Officers for the next year.

Section 5. Quorum.

Ten percent of the resident members of this Church shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of transacting business.

Section 6. Parliamentary Rules.

Roberts Rules of Order may be used at the discretion of the moderator for all business meetings of the Church.

ARTICLE VI – CHURCH FINANCES

Section 1.

The Board shall prepare and submit to the Church for approval at its annual business meeting (or at such other time as may be deemed best by the Church) an inclusive budget, indicating by items the amount needed and sought for all local expenses and purposes, and in like manner for all denominational or other approved non-local causes.

Section 2.

All funds, for any and all purposes, shall pass through the hands of the Treasurer and be properly recorded on the books of the Church. The expenses of all organizations, as approved by the Church, shall be paid from the local expense fund as heretofore provided.

Section 3.

Special offerings may be sought by the Church or by any of its organizations upon approval of the pastor or the Church. This does not preclude individuals making special offerings at any time as the Spirit of God may move them.

Section 4.

It is understood that membership in this Church involves financial obligation to support the Church and its causes with regular gifts. Each new member will be advised of the Church's financial program and given opportunity to make a pledge to the Church Unified Budget.

ARTICLE VII – DISCIPLINE

Section 1.

Should any unhappy differences arise between members, the aggrieved member shall follow, in a tender spirit, the rules given by our Lord in the Eighteenth Chapter of Matthew.

Section 2.

Should any case of gross breach of covenant, or of public scandal occur, the deacons shall endeavor to resolve the problem and if such efforts fail, shall report the case to the Church.

Section 3.

If the Church votes to entertain a complaint, which must be made in writing, it shall appoint a reasonable time and place of hearing and notify the person(s) in question thereof, furnishing him with a copy of the complaint.

Section 4.

At such hearing, the accused member(s) may call to his aid any member(s) of the Church as counsel. If he shall not present himself at the time appointed, or give satisfactory reasons for his neglect to do so, the Church may proceed in his absence.

Section 5.

All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance, but should an adverse decision be reached the Church may proceed to admonish or declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the Church.

ARTICLE VIII - Governing Board

The Church will maintain a Governing board. The Governing Board will consist of the pastor who will be the Chairman of the board, and no less than two or no more than four other members. All items will be decide by a vote, majority carries the motion. In the case there is a tie vote the Chairman of the board will cast the deciding vote.

When the need for new board members arise, individuals will be nominated by the pastor and the board and voted on by the membership. (Anyone can recommend someone for nomination).

1. The board will make choices in day to day operations of the Church, such as purchase of basic supplies, insurances, helping those in need, which will include spending in many cases. The board can approve up to \$200.00 in financial matters. Any amount exceeding that limit must be approved by the membership by a majority vote.
2. Any major decisions must be brought to a vote by the membership.
3. The board will meet once a month and the decisions made in said meeting will be made available to any member upon request.
4. The board will make faithful effort to insure the members are made aware of changes in operating procedure.
5. All motions that are passed will be presented to the Church at the next regular business meeting.
6. Any motions that are deemed to have what seems to be a direct or sweeping effect on the membership will be brought to membership for a vote.

ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS

These By-Laws may be amended by a majority vote of the members present and voting at any business meeting of the Church, or at a meeting specially called for that purpose, said proposed change having been laid before the Church in writing at a business meeting not less than thirty (30) days before the

time of the proposed action, and read from the pulpit prior to the vote. As we grow amendments will be required for the health of our Church.

Declaration of absolute right to govern our Church.

We hold to the right to believe in the Holy Bible as our only standard. We will not be subject to any law or requirement which instructs us to violate the laws of God, or the heart of His teaching. We reserve the right to and will continue to teach God's truths including but not limited to those in our statement of faith at all times to all who enter our gathering and those we encounter: even to the penalty of death. May Christ be Glorified.

Our articles of faith are attached to this document.

In the event of dissolution of Abundant Life SBC of Kingsford after paying or making arrangements for all obligations, any remaining assets shall be turned over to the Southern Baptist State Convention of Michigan.