

NORTONVILLE GOSPEL CHAPEL
CONSTITUTION

Revised 2010

NORTONVILLE GOSPEL CHAPEL CONSTITUTION

We, the members of the Nortonville Gospel Chapel, Inc. do ordain and establish the following articles to which we voluntarily submit ourselves:

ARTICLE I *Articles of Belief*

The scriptural doctrines to which we hold are contained in the following Articles of Belief:

- I. We believe that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God”, by which we understand the whole of the Book called the Bible. We do not take the statement in the sense in which it is sometimes foolishly said that works of human genius are inspired, but in the sense that the Holy Ghost gave the very words of the sacred writings to holy men of old. His Divine inspiration is not in different degrees but extends equally and fully to all parts of these words, and inflection of a word, provided such word is found in the original manuscripts. We believe that all Scriptures, from first to last, center about our Lord Jesus Christ, in His person and work, in His first and second coming. No chapter even of the Old Testament is properly read or understood until it leads to Him. All Scriptures, from first to last, including every chapter of the Old Testament, were designed for our practical instructions.

II Tim. 3:16-17; II Peter 1:20-21; I Cor. 2:13; Mark 12:26; Mark 13:11;
Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39; Rom. 15:4

- II. We believe in one God as the Bible teaches, and that this God exists in three persons – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are one God having precisely the same nature, attributes and perfection and worthy of precisely the same homage, confidence and obedience.

John 1:1-4; Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 5:3-4; Rev 1:4-6; Deut. 6:4

- a. We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary, and is true God and true man. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice, and that all who believe on Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood. We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, in His ascension into Heaven, and in His present life there for us as High Priest and advocate.

Isa. 7:14; Luke 1:35; I Peter 2:24; Rom. 8:25; I Cor. 15:3-4; Rom. 8:34

- b. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment, who urges the sinner to believe and repent, and who regenerates, baptizes, indwells, enlightens and empowers the saved, sealing them unto the day of redemption.

John 16:8; I Cor. 3:16; Eph. 1:13-14; I Cor. 12:12-14

III. We believe that man, originally created in the image and after the likeness of God, fell from his high and holy estate by eating the forbidden fruit, and as the consequence of this disobedience the threatened penalty of death was then and there inflicted so that his moral nature was not only grievously injured by the fall, but he totally lost all spiritual life, becoming dead in trespasses and sins, and subject to the power of the devil. We believe that every child of Adam, Christ Jesus alone excepted, is born into the world with a nature which not only possesses no spark of Divine life, but is essentially and unchangeably bad, being enmity against God and incapable by any educational process whatever of subjection to His law.

Gen. 1:26; Gen. 2:17; Eph. 2:1-3; I John 3:8; Rom. 3:22-23; Rom. 5:12-19;
Psa. 14:1-3; Psa. 51:5; Jer. 17:9; John 3:6; Rom. 8:6-7

IV. We believe that, owing to this universal depravity and death in sin, no one can enter the Kingdom of God unless born again. No degree of reformation – however great, no attainment in morality – however high, no culture – however attractive, no humanitarian and philanthropic schemes and societies – however administered, can help the sinner to take even one step toward Heaven. We believe that all who receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ are born again, of the Holy Spirit, and that they thereby become children of God, and members of the Body of Christ, the invisible Church, which includes all born-again persons in this present age.

John 3:3,5,18; Gal. 6:15; Phil. 3:4-9; I Peter 1:23; John 1:12

V. (a) We believe that all the redeemed, once saved are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever.

John 6:37-40; John 10:27-30; Rom. 8:1, 38-39

(b) We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word; which however clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh.

Rom. 13:13-14; Gal. 5:13; Titus 2:11-15

VI. We believe that we are called with a holy calling to walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, and so to live in the Spirit that we should not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. The flesh being still in us to the end of our earthly pilgrimage needs to be kept constantly in subjection to Christ, or it will surely manifest its presence to the dishonor of His name.

Rom. 8:12; Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 4:22-24; I Peter 4:14-16

VII. We believe that sexual intimacy is a wonderful gift of God that is only to be expressed between one man and one woman (as genetically defined), within the love and bonds of marriage. Therefore, we believe that any other form of sexual intimacy is both immoral and a perversion of God's gift.

Gen. 2:24-25; Matt. 19:4-6; 1 Cor. 7:3-5; Heb. 13:4;
Lev. 18:1-30; Prov. 6:32; 1 Cor. 6:18; Rom. 1:26-27; 1 Thess. 4:3-8

VIII. We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord; and that separation from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices and associations is commanded of God.

Rom. 12:1-2; II Tim. 3:1-5; John 2:15-17; II Cor. 6:14; II Cor. 7:1

IX. We believe that Satan is a person, the author of sin and the cause of the fall; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and that he and his followers shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire.

Matt. 4:2-11; Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10

X. We believe that the world will not be converted during the present dispensation but is fast ripening for judgment in the great tribulation, while there will be a fearful apostasy in the professing Christian body. The Lord Jesus will come in person to introduce the millennial age, when Israel shall be restored to their own land and that the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord. His personal and pre-millennial advent is the blessed hope set before us in the Gospel, for which we should be constantly looking.

Matt. 24:21-22; Luke 12:35-40; Luke 17:26-30; Acts 15:14-17;
II Thes. 2:3-8; II Thes. 4:16-17

XI. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment.

Matt. 25:46; John 5:28-29; John 11:25-26; Rev. 20:5-6, 12-13

XII. We believe that the Church is composed of all who are united by the Holy Spirit to the risen and ascended Son of God and that by the same Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles. Thus, being members one of another, we are responsible to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace rising above all sectarian prejudices and denominational bigotry and loving one another with a pure heart fervently.

I Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 1:20-23; Acts 2:23-47; Rom. 12:5

XIII. We believe that there are two ordinances for the Church of today: water baptism and the Lord's Table.

Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; I Cor. 11:23-26; Acts 18:8

XIV. We believe that the biblical offices of pastor, elder, and deacon in the church, or their equivalents, are restricted to biblically qualified men.

1 Tim. 2:12; 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9

ARTICLE II *Membership*

Section A.

Persons desiring to unite with this Church shall be examined by at least two Elders and voted upon by the Board of Directors as to their Christian experience, the basis of their

salvation and the acceptance of the Articles of Belief. Those with letters from other fundamental churches shall present them at this time. Applicants whose examination is satisfactory will be notified by the Board of Directors. Public acceptance shall be made within a reasonable time as determined by the board.

Section B.

We urge and expect all members to adhere to the following practices in their daily lives: regular attendance at the services of God's house, attendance at the Lord's Supper, the daily systematic reading of the Bible, private and family prayer, personal and public testimony, winning of others to Christ, proportionate and systematic giving for the support of the Lord's work at home and abroad, loyal obedience to the moral precepts of God's Word, and separation from worldly alliances and practices.

I John 2:15-16; Matt. 6:32; II Cor. 6:14-7:1

ARTICLE III

Meetings and Ordinances

Section A.

The regular services of this Church shall be Morning Worship, Sunday School and Evening Services on the Lord's Day, and the Mid-Week Prayer Meeting, unless otherwise agreed upon by the Board of Directors.

Section B.

The Lord's Supper will be observed on the first Sunday of every other month, beginning with the first Sunday in January. Special Communion services may be held on Easter or Good Friday and other special occasions. We believe that this is the Lord's table and all who have received Jesus Christ as their Savior, and are prepared in heart and mind, are welcome to partake thereof in the spirit of I Cor. 11:23-24.

Section C.

The opportunity for baptism shall be given at least once a year, as a visible sign of a personal acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior. The teaching and practice of this Church is baptism by immersion upon the individual's confession of faith and request for baptism.

ARTICLE IV

Government

Section A.

The government of the Church is vested in its members. A member must be sixteen (16) years of age to be eligible to vote. A child must be twelve (12) to be added to the Church membership roll.

Section B.

The Church may be called together for the transaction of any legitimate business by two-thirds majority vote of the Board; notice of such meetings having been given at regular church meetings for two Sundays proceeding the day appointed. The regular annual business meeting of the Church shall be held during the third week of September each year, at which time shall occur the reading of the minutes of the previous meetings, annual reports, election of officers and other necessary business. Each member shall have the right to express his opinion or ask questions concerning church business or church activities from the floor. The meeting shall be governed by parliamentary rules. Absentee

ballot voting will be allowed only on an issue which is clearly defined and in which a recommendation in the form of a motion by the Board is presented to the congregation in writing and public announcement at least two weeks before voting on the issue. Absentee ballots are valid for the first vote only and only on the original motion. Twenty-five percent of voting membership constitutes a quorum for any regular or special meeting. Absentee ballots cannot be used to establish a quorum.

Section C.

The church members may make any change or amendment in their Constitution which seems necessary, provided such changes are submitted to the members in written form at least two weeks previous to being voted upon, and they shall pass by a two-thirds majority of the members when present.

Section D.

Teachers and officers in the Sunday School, executive officers of adult sub-organizations and adult directors of other sub-organizations must be members of this church (unless otherwise excused by the Board and shall be required to subscribe in writing to the statement of faith). These signatures shall be secured by the clerk and kept in the records of the Church. All persons who speak in our public services must be professing Christians whose lives are consistent with their profession.

Section E.

Policy manual: A policy manual will be established and implemented by the Board. The policy manual will cover day to day business not covered by the Constitution.

1. The policy manual shall be reviewed by the Board during the February meeting.
2. The updated policy manual will be available to the congregation following the Board review process.

ARTICLE V *The Board*

Section A.

Membership: The Board shall consist of the Pastor, at least two elders, and two deacons. All Board members must be members in good standing of this church and at the first meeting following their election; they shall be required to subscribe in writing to a statement of faithfulness to Biblical Standards for Elder and Deacons. The Board shall be responsible for the general business of the church, the examination of candidates for membership, discipline, appropriation of funds, and supervision of the sub-organizations. They shall be self-governing and shall elect their own officers.

Section B.

1. The Pastor: The Pastor shall be President of the Board and shall by virtue of his office, discharge all the functions of the ministry and together with the Elders shall be directly concerned with the spiritual welfare of the congregation. The Pastor shall vote only to break a tie.
2. Ordination of Pastoral Candidates: Candidates for pastor are highly recommended to have Bible institute, college, or seminary degrees in pastoral/Bible/theology studies. Candidates will be nominated by members of the board; the board shall then ask for council of fundamental pastors and professors of both their and the candidate's choosing to examine the candidate. Upon the council's affirmative recommendation, the board shall present the candidate to the congregation for approval by a two-thirds majority vote.

3. If at any time his personal belief, preaching or teaching shall not be in full accord with the doctrinal statement of this church, his services as pastor shall be terminated by at least two-thirds of the voting membership present.

Section C.

1. Elders and Deacons: Members of the board shall make and accept nominations for Elder and Deacon and shall present them to the church at least two Sundays before the annual meeting. They shall be elected by the church, and a majority of all votes cast shall be required to elect them. Their term of office shall be for two years. Elders and Deacons can serve no more than two consecutive terms (total of four years) in either office, or in a combination of offices, after which one-year recess is required. Voting may not take place until the Scripture stating their qualifications has been read (I Tim. 3:1-13). The congregation can nominate candidates for Elder and Deacon in writing only to the board not later than September 1 for consideration for the annual business meeting. The Pastor and selected Board members will then consider and notify nominated candidates for acceptance of the nominations.
2. The Elders shall help in the preparation and administration of the Lord's Supper, and such other spiritual offices as the Word of God assigns.
3. The Deacons shall be entrusted with such responsibilities as the Word of God assigns and be custodians of the properties.
4. Sunday School Superintendent and Assistants: The Sunday School Superintendent shall be appointed by the pastor and approved by the board. The term in office shall be for two years.

Section D.

1. Officers of the Board: The officers of the Board shall be as follows: President, Vice-President, Clerk, Missionary Treasurer, and Treasurer; to be chosen with the exception of the President by the board from among membership of the board and to serve one year.
2. The President shall perform such duties as usually pertain to the office.
3. The Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President in the absence of the President.
4. The Clerk shall keep record of all business transacted at the Congregational and Board meetings, shall keep record of the membership of the Church, shall secure signatures as required above, and is authorized to sign all legal documents which have been approved by the Board of Directors or the congregation.
5. The Treasurer shall be responsible for holding and disbursement of church funds, make a semi-annual report and shall submit the books for audit by an auditing committee, to be determined and commissioned by the Board of Directors.
6. The Missionary Treasurer shall be responsible for holding and disbursement of the missionary fund make a semi-annual report and submit the books for audit by an auditing committee, to be determined and commissioned by the Board of Directors.

Section E.

Committees: The Board shall from time to time establish such standing and temporary committees as may be necessary. Appointments shall be made by the Board.

Section F.

Board Meetings: Regular Board meetings shall be held at least bi-monthly or as stipulated by the Board of Directors. Special meetings may be called by the President at any time. Two-thirds of existing board members shall constitute a quorum.

Section G.

Spending: The Board is authorized to spend up to \$1500.00 without congregational approval for routine church business or maintenance. In the event of emergency situations, the Board will be allowed freedom to spend above this amount. Any spending above \$1500.00 without congregational approval will be followed by congregational notification in a timely manner.

ARTICLE VI

Discipline

The discipline of the Church, being entirely entrusted to the Board by the Constitution, shall be exercised according to the following principles.

Section A.

Inactive membership: The name of any member who shall be absent from the services for a period of one (1) year without giving a satisfactory reason for such absence to the clerk or pastor, and having been visited and encouraged to attend, will be placed on inactive membership.

Those on inactive membership will lose voting privileges and the ability to hold offices in the Church. Inactive members will be required to reapply and then receive acceptance for active membership before such privileges will be restored.

Members leaving the area for a time and desiring their membership retained, should keep the Church informed of their whereabouts through correspondence with the church clerk. The names of persons uniting with another church, without a letter from this Church, shall be deleted from the roll by a vote of the Board.

Section B.

Excommunication: In all cases of disorderly conduct or of heretical doctrine so opposed to the Church's life and faith as to destroy the possibility of fellowship, procedure shall be in the following manner: the person involved shall first be dealt with and interviewed as directed in Matthew 18:15-18. If this does not lead to restoration of fellowship, charges shall be put in writing and placed in his or her hands and he or she summoned to meet the Board at some date not more than two and not less than one week subsequently. The accused, on being notified, may immediately select any member of the Board to assist or represent him or her in the examination, while the chairman shall appoint one of its members for prosecution. After a fair and impartial hearing of all the witnesses accessible and all facts ascertainable, if the majority believes him or her guilty, the name of said party shall be stricken from the roll and publicly read as excommunicated at the first Sunday morning service succeeding the trial. Failure on the part of the accused to appear for trial will not prevent the Board from examining the case and rendering a verdict in accordance with the testimony received.

Section C.

Suspensions: In any case of offense not judged worthy of excommunication the offender, having been summoned before the Elder Board and given a fair hearing after having been counseled by the Elder Board, may be suspended by them from the sacred ordinance of the Lord's Supper for such a time as they see fit. At the end of this time the Elder Board shall decide whether the member shall be restored to good standing because of evidence of repentance and right living, or whether further discipline shall be imposed.

Section D.

Controversy: In case of controversy that cannot be settled in the manner outlined in Section C, under the heading of Excommunication, the Board shall have the right of two-thirds majority vote by ballot, to call in a group of disinterested persons, who shall be a part of the Board of some Independent Fundamental Church, to arbitrate the issue. In all cases of discipline, it is the duty of the pastor and elders to have visited and have done their very best to straighten the matter out before it is brought to the Board for action.

ARTICLE VII

Properties

Section A.

Dissolution: No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall ever inure to the benefit of any donor, member, director or officer of the corporation, or any private individual; and no donor, member, director, officer of the corporation, or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the corporation assets. Upon dissolution, any assets of the corporation must be distributed to Independent Bible Mission.