

CONSTITUTION OF MIDDLE URBANA MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

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PREAMBLE

We the members of Middle Urbana Missionary Baptist Church (MUMBC) do ordain and establish the following Constitution to which we voluntarily submit.

ARTICLE I

NAME:

The name of this Church shall be “Middle Urbana Missionary Baptist Church”. The word “church” as used in this constitution shall refer to Middle Urbana Missionary Baptist, whereas the word “Church” shall refer to the Body and Bride of Christ.

ARTICLE II

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this church shall be to glorify God Through: (1) **Worship** – (Exalting the name of Jesus) *Loving the Lord with all of our heart, soul, and mind* (Matt 22:37). Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve (Matt 4:10). (2) **Ministry** – (Serving) *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself* (Matt 22:39). This church shall seek to demonstrate God’s love to others by meeting their needs and healing their hurts (“For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry (Eph 4:12)). (3) **Evangelism** – (Spreading the gospel) *Going into the World to Make Disciples*. We exist to spread God’s word, we are ambassadors for Christ to go out into the world and bring people into God’s eternal family (Go ye therefore and teach all nations. Matt 28:19). (4) **Baptism** – (Baptizing committed Members) *Making disciples by baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost* (Matt 28:19). This church stresses the importance of Baptism and church membership, we are called to believe and to belong. *Fellowship* and identification within a local Church are vital to growing in the

Lord. (5) **Discipleship** – (Developing Mature Christians) *Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you* (Matt 28:20). This church exists to edify and to educate our members. It is our goal that every member of this church grow in grace and knowledge and become more and more Christ-like in their daily lives.

PURPOSE STATEMENT:

Loving God, Living Jesus, Learning to Serve.

ARTICLE III.

CHURCH UNITY:

It is the goal of this church to become “One Body in Christ” per our covenant and to be in one mind and one accord. When the members of the church disagree or their interpretations differ, we pray that the love of Christ guard our attitudes and conduct to one another so that we exhibit a genuine concern for the edification of all of God’s people in an atmosphere of love.

ARTICLE IV.

INCORPORATION:

To implement this purpose legally the church is incorporated under the laws of the state of Ohio so that it may own, provide and/or maintain a place of worship (including suitable real estate and buildings), receive, hold and disburse gifts, bequests and funds, and/or do all and sundry things necessary or incident to carry on such purpose.

AUTHORITY AND REPRESENTATION:

The Board of Deacons are the governing body of this church for matters of civil law and financial responsibility, and are entrusted as the “trustees” of the church’s property and assets.

ARTICLE V.

MEMBERSHIP:

Any person may become a member upon professing saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and Baptism, or by a letter from another church of a similar faith and order.

1. Procedure to become a member:

- a. Any individual petitioning to join the church will be given the right hand of Christian fellowship and taken under the Watch Care of the Church.
- b. Prospective members will be under the Watch Care of the church for a *minimum* of one month (times may vary based on circumstances and approval of the Pastor and Deacons).
- c. Being under the Watch Care of the church means that the individual is a “prospective member” pending a vote of the church, and baptism or a letter from a church of a similar faith and order.
- d. Any individual who requests to join the church must have been a regular attendee for a minimum of 3 months.
- e. Any individual under the age of 18 must have parental permission to join the church and have an adult family member accompany them to the “Church Information Classes”.

- f. The individual *should* have attended our Church Information Classes to learn the purpose of church membership, and their responsibilities as a member. (Membership responsibilities are outlined in this Constitution and the Church Covenant found in Appendix A)
- g. The prospective member will be voted on by current church members at the first business meeting following the Watch Care period.
- h. Membership begins upon the individuals Baptism or receipt of an acceptable letter of recommendation from a Church of a similar faith and order.
- i. Extraordinary Circumstances may dictate additional or less stringent requirements/timelines to the above as determined by the Pastor and Deacons.

2. Renewal of Membership: There shall be an annual renewal of membership. Renewal shall be automatic provided a member: (1) is walking and living a Christian life (consistent with Biblical principles) and fulfilling their responsibilities to the church per the Covenant. (2) has not “habitually absented him/her self from the house of the Lord”. Habitual absence means the member has not attended at least 30 Sunday Services (AM or PM) during the last year (with “common sense” provisions for sickness, military service or work related commitments (provided that proper notifications are made).

3. Discipline of Members: The purpose of church discipline is to return a member who errs back to a Biblical standard of conduct and doctrine (Gal 6:1), to maintain purity in the local church (I Cor 5:6) and to deter sin (I Tim 5:20). Any member of this church who teaches or insists on holding false doctrine, and persistently conducts himself or herself in a manner inconsistent with Biblical teaching, or who persists in disturbing the unity and peace of the church shall be dealt with as follows according to Matt 18: 15-18.

a. It is the duty of any member of this church who has knowledge of an erring member’s heresy or misconduct to warn and correct the erring member in private, seeking his/her repentance and restoration.

b. If the erring member does not heed this warning, the warning member shall again go to the erring member accompanied by one or two other members as witnesses to warn and correct, seeking repentance/restoration.

c. If the erring member still refuses to heed the warning, the matter shall be brought to the attention of the Board of Deacons, who upon careful and prayerful investigation shall tell it to the church in hopes of the repentance/restoration of the erring member.

d. If the erring member refuses to heed the warnings of the Board of Deacons and the church, he/she shall be dismissed from the church pursuant to the scriptures and treated as an unbeliever. There shall be no appeal of the discipline process or the dismissal to any court. The church shall be encouraged to pray for the repentance and well-being of the erring member.

e. It should be noted that incidents of an infamous, scandalous, nature such as murder, adultery, perjury, theft, forgery, drunkenness or any kindred type of public crime, will result in immediate dismissal from church membership without trial, provided that the Board of Deacons are convinced beyond doubt of the individuals guilt. During a trial or investigation for any such crime, the individual shall be considered to be on

“probation of membership” (meaning that voting rights, and all church privileges are lost) pending resolution of the investigation.

4. Termination of Membership: Membership may be terminated in one of four ways:

a. By death.

b. By transfer: When it is requested, the church may grant to a departing member in good standing, a letter of dismissal to the fellowship of another church of similar faith and order. No such letter may be given to a member who is at the time under the corrective discipline of this church. The Board of Deacons may refuse to grant a letter of transfer to any church, which is in their judgment, disloyal to the Gospel (Jude 3).

- c. By exclusion: If a member habitually absents himself/herself from stated meetings of a church without valid reason, or if due to relocation he/she ceases to maintain vital contact with the church, he/she may be excluded from membership. If an excluded member applies again for membership, the procedures set forth will again be followed.
- d. By dismissal as a final step of church discipline.

ARTICLE VI.

DOCTRINE:

We accept the Holy scriptures of the King James Version of the Bible as our final authority in matters of faith and practice and adopt the 19 Articles of Faith (located in Appendix B) as our interpretation of Biblical Doctrine.

ARTICLE VII.

QUALIFICATIONS OF CHURCH LEADERS:

All persons who hold any position of leadership (including but not limited to teachers, committee members, and other Church positions) must meet and maintain the following spiritual qualifications for leadership:

1. Has accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.
2. Is a member of MUMBC.
3. Teaches/preaches no doctrine contrary to the “19 Articles of Faith” (see Appendix B.).
4. Provides systematic spiritual, financial, and physical support to the church per the Covenant (see Appendix A.)
5. Is known for a dedicated Christian life according to the standards of God’s Word, and will purpose to put any sin, including doubtful conduct and conversation, out of his/her life so that the resulting influence is helpful rather than a hindrance.
6. Fulfills such specific biblical requirements applicable to their position, for example – Ordained Ministers and Deacons must meet the requirements set forth in 1 Tim chapter 3.
 - a. Those called to preach, may be licensed no sooner than 6 months after their first preaching appointment, upon recommendation by the Board of Deacons and majority vote of the church.
 - b. Ordination of ministers shall take place no sooner than 1 year after their first preaching engagement and upon the recommendation of the Board of Deacons, the consent of the Preacher to be ordained, and the majority vote of the church. Preachers shall be set aside for a minimum of 2 months prior to ordination. Ordination shall take place through the customary Presbytery and laying on of hands.
 - c. Prospective Deacons shall be recommended by the Current Board of Deacons and approved by a majority vote of the church. Deacons shall be set aside for a minimum of 2 months prior to ordination. Ordination shall take place through the customary Presbytery and laying on of hands.

ARTICLE VIII.

PASTOR, DEACONS AND OTHER CHURCH WORKERS/LEADERS:

God has provided for two forms spiritual leadership in the church, the Pastor and Deacons. Other Workers and Leaders in the church shall be under the direction of the Pastor and Deacons. The duties of the Pastor and Deacons are clearly laid out in “The Baptist Church Manual” and are summarized and expanded on below:

1. Duties of the Pastor:

- a. The Pastor is responsible for the spiritual oversight of the church congregation, just as the shepherd has oversight of the flock.
- b. The Pastor shall give himself to prayer and the study of the word of God.
- c. The Pastor shall “feed the sheep” by preaching and teaching the word of God.
- d. The Pastor shall administer the Church Ordinances of Baptism and The Lords Supper.
- e. The Pastor shall share in the “pastoral care” of the congregation along with the Deacons of the church.
- f. The Pastor shall perform marriage ceremonies at his discretion as long as the marriage is in accordance with the Doctrine of this Church (see Appendix B. Article 19).
- g. The Pastor shall officiate at funerals of members of the Church. Services for non-members shall be at his discretion.
- h. Along with the Deacons shall maintain church discipline.
- i. Participate in the ordination of other preachers and Deacons within the church.
- j. Act as an ex-officio member of all committees and boards.
- k. Perform other constitutional, scriptural, and general pastoral duties.

2. Duties of Deacons:

- a. The Deacons primarily serve 3 Tables; the Table of the Poor, the Table of the Lord, and the Table of the Pastor.
- b. The Deacons shall work with the Pastor as partners for the church’s spiritual growth.
- c. Shall maintain and uphold Church Discipline
- d. Praying for the sick and visiting the congregation.
- e. Teaching and exhorting those who contradict the truth.
- f. Consistently modeling spiritual character, attitude, values and behavior.
- g. Providing and inviting the opportunity for frequent and ongoing contact with members of the church.
- h. Conduct the affairs of the church in an atmosphere of openness and mutual sensitivity, focusing as much on nurturing one another as on decision making.
- i. The Deacons are responsible for the general oversight and affairs of the church, such as:
 - i. Oversight and execution of the church’s financial affairs, budget, etc.
 - ii. Approval and oversight of all of the church’s subordinate groups.
 - iii. Representing the church as “trustees” in matters of civil law and property.
 - iv. Oversight of the physical condition of the church property.
 - v. Insuring that teachers and other Church leaders are properly qualified for their duties.

3. Duties of Other Church Leaders:

To perform the duties of their position under the authority and instruction of the Pastor and Deacons.

ARTICLE IX.

PROPERTY AND ASSETS:

1. The church shall have the power to receive, either by gift or purchase, and so hold such real personal, or mixed property as is authorized by the laws of the State of Ohio and is deemed necessary for the functioning of the church, and shall have the power to dispose of such property by mortgage, bill of sale, deed, or otherwise. All property shall be held in the name of the church.
2. In case of division (and ultimate dissolution of the church) caused by conflict or other reason (from which we pray God by His mercy to preserve us), all property and assets of the church shall be sold, either through private or public sale. From the proceeds, firstly all current and long-term obligations of the church shall be paid. Secondly, all remaining funds shall be directed to such one or more Christian organizations qualified under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, as determined (by vote) by those who are members in good standing, and who have been abiding by the constitution. The church shall be considered dissolved if so decided by the congregation, or when the church has less than six remaining members.
3. No real property shall be purchased or disposed of without approval of the congregation, except as noted in Para. 2 above.

ARTICLE X.

BUSINESS MEETINGS:

- A. Regular Business Meetings shall be held on the 2nd Sunday of every month unless holidays or special circumstances (schedule conflicts, etc.) cause the business meeting to be rescheduled as soon as possible on a following Sunday. Special Business meetings may be called provided at least 2 weeks notice is given to the Church Body. The Pastor by virtue of his office serves as the moderator. In the pastor's absence the Chairman of the Board of Deacons shall act as moderator (No motion and second is needed to elect the Chairman of the Board of Deacons as Moderator Pro-Tem). If both the Pastor and the Chairman is absent the church must elect a moderator Pro-Tem from the remaining deacons.
- B. Women shall have equal rights to make motions and seconds, enter into discussion, and vote in all business meetings except for those meetings held specifically for the Laying on of hands for the spiritual offices of the church (example: Ordination Service – Or other Presbytery formation Service) or other matters of Spiritual Authority/Interpretation as determined by the Board of Deacons.
- C. It is the responsibility of the moderator to maintain order throughout the session and to call any member “out of order” should a rule of decorum (see Article XIV) be broken.

D. The order of the business meeting shall be as follows:

1. The Moderator shall call the church to order for conducting business.
2. There shall be a call to receive members (however it should be noted that the church is always open to receive members).
3. The minutes of the last business session shall be read and approved or amended and then approved.
4. The financial report(s) of the treasurer shall be read and approved or amended and then approved.
5. Any unfinished business (from previous meetings) shall be addressed.
6. Reports from any active committees and the Board of deacons shall be read.
7. Any new business may be brought before the church by a motion (new business should (if possible) have been consulted on through the board of deacons prior to coming before the church). The active motion must be seconded prior to any discussion and subsequent vote. In the event that a motion is brought forward that pertains to a total expenditure of greater than \$500, the motion will automatically be tabled for a period not to exceed 90 days (3 business meetings) to allow the deacons to review and research the motion and also for discussion/questions among church members. The motion may be opened for ongoing discussion prior to the end of the 90 day period.
8. A motion and second to adjourn followed by a vote (no discussion) shall close the meeting

ARTICLE XI.

VOTING:

Only members of this church who are at least 18 years of age are eligible to vote at any business meeting of the church.

ARTICLE XII.

QUORUMS:

The presence in person of at least 20% of the church's eligible voters shall constitute a quorum. Amendments of the constitution or election of the Pastor shall require a quorum of 30%. The Pastor (as Moderator) and the Board of Deacons shall be responsible for determining if a quorum is present before entering into the business meeting of the church.

ARTICLE XIII.

ELECTIONS:

Church elections shall be held on an annual basis in the month of September with the elected persons taking office in January. Sunday School and Training Union Elections shall take place on the Sunday morning and evening following the Church Elections. All other subordinate groups should hold elections for other positions as soon as possible following the church elections. The following positions shall be elected during the Business meeting:

- a. Clerk
- b. Pastor
- c. Treasurer
- d. Janitor (1)
- e. Janitor (2)
- f. Sunday School Sup.
- g. Training Union Sup.
- h. Women's Group Leader
- i. Reachout Director
- j. Jr. Reachout Director
- k. Christian Life Center Coordinator.

THE ELECTION PROCESS:

1. Anyone desiring to resign from their current position should inform the group leader, Superintendent, or Board of Deacons no later than the last Sunday in August (obviously resignations can come at any time due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances, however, it is prudent to provide the church ample notice).
2. Resignations and the opportunity to submit nominations shall be announced to the Church on the First Sunday in August. Nominations may be received through the last Sunday in August. Nominations shall be made to the Board of Deacons for the positions listed above.
3. Nominations can only be made provided that: the person being nominated knows and has consented to the nomination, and another member provides a "second" to the nomination.
4. The Board of Deacons shall verify the qualifications of each nominee prior to posting or announcement to the church.
5. A list of nominations for each position shall be posted and announced to the church on the first Sunday in September.
6. All persons nominated for a position shall meet with the board of Deacons to discuss their qualifications and the position. If two or more people are elected for the same position they will be permitted to discuss alternatives (i.e. lead and assistant etc.) however, this shall not be mandated. During the election process at the business meeting, if there are still two or more persons nominated and desiring the same position, the voting shall be done by written ballot. (It should be noted that two persons with the proper qualifications should be able to work in unity and submit themselves to the will of the Lord and the church.)

ARTICLE XIV.

RULES OF DECORUM A.

IN BUSINESS MEETINGS:

1. In business session, only one member shall speak at a time, who shall address the moderator by the application of brother.
2. Any member except the moderator shall not interrupt the member thus speaking until he/she is done speaking.
3. The member speaking shall adhere to the subject and in no wise cast reflection on the member(s) who spoke prior, so as to make remarks on their misguidance or imperfection, but shall fairly state the case as near as they can to convey their meaning.
4. No member shall speak more than three times on a subject without permission of the moderator.
5. No member shall abruptly break off or absent himself or herself from the church, while in business session, without the leave of the moderator.
6. No member shall be whispering or laughing during the meeting.
7. The members of the church shall address one another by the application of brother or sister.
8. The moderator shall not interrupt any member while speaking unless they break a rule of decorum or other business meeting procedure.

These Rules of Decorum shall be read to the Church at the beginning of the Business meeting on a Quarterly Basis.

B. IN WORSHIP SESSION:

1. No person should be whispering or laughing excessively during worship.
2. No person shall interrupt another person who is speaking unless it is the Pastor or a Deacon.
3. No person shall be reading books (other than the Bible), newspapers magazines etc. during worship, unless the teacher or preacher has directed them to another source for reference.
4. All in attendance should uphold an atmosphere of reverence, worship, and praise. Any behavior that detracts from the service will not be tolerated.
5. The worship service should be "decent and orderly" and be led by the Holy Spirit. Each member's actions/behavior and testimony should contribute to our purpose of exalting the name of Jesus.
6. Each person shall be respectful of: The Lords name, other worshippers, and the house of God.

These Rules of Decorum shall be read to the Church on the First Sunday of the Month on a Quarterly Basis – prior to the worship service.

ARTICLE XV.

AMENDMENTS:

The constitution, articles of incorporation, articles of faith, or the church covenant may be amended by a two-thirds majority of the members voting, provide that a quorum exists as specified in Article XII.

ARTICLE XVI.

FUND RAISING:

The financing of church functions shall be accomplished through tithes, offerings and gifts. It shall not be the policy of this church to promote suppers, parties, or engage in the sale of products and/or services for the purpose of raising funds. The Board of Deacons must approve any exception to this rule.

ARTICLE XVII.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF CHURCH RECORDS:

No member shall have the right to inspect the church records as to (1) the disciplining of any member, (2) the need or problems of any member or officer, (3) the financial contributions of any member or entity, or (4) any other records which the Board of Deacons may determine to be in the best interest of the church to keep confidential.

Revision History

Date	Name	Comment
August 2, 2011	Brent Patterson	Updated to reflect new purpose statement and moving elections to September
November 7, 2015	Brent Patterson	Updated to reflect adoption of 19th Article of Faith (page 3 Article 6; page 4 1.f.)
October 19, 2016	Brent Patterson	Updated to reflect adoption of updated process for membership (Article V page 2)