

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
MIDVALE BAPTIST CHURCH OF
MADISON, WISCONSIN

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CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
MIDVALE BAPTIST CHURCH OF
MADISON, WISCONSIN

*As adopted by the congregation on December 14, 1986 and amended on October 15, 1989,
October 17, 1993, April 17, 201 and September 15, 2013.*

PREAMBLE

For a more certain preservation and security of the principles of our faith and to the end that this church may be governed in an orderly manner and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of the church and the freedom of action of this church in its relation with other churches, we do declare this constitution.

Article I

Section 1. Name and Legal Identity

This church shall be known as Midvale Baptist Church of Madison, located at 821 South Midvale Boulevard, Madison, Wisconsin 53711.

Legal Status

Midvale Baptist Church is a non-profit organization incorporated in the State of Wisconsin for religious purposes. The corporate officers of the church are its trustees who act as directed by the church in all legal matters.

Section 3. Tax Status

Midvale Baptist Church is tax exempt under United States Statute 501(c)(3).

Article II

Section 4. Missions and Objectives

The mission of this church shall be the worship of God; the teaching and preaching of the Word of God; the practice of the precepts and examples of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ as set forth by the New Testament; the nurturing of Christian fellowship; the recognition of God's authority in the stewardship of our resources; and to propagate the Gospel of salvation by personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

More specifically, the church's objectives shall be:

Worship To magnify our worship of God by encouraging the cultivation of a personal

devotional life as well as participation in corporate worship.

Fellowship (Koinonia) To establish a Christ-like fellowship that recognizes and develops personal relations within the church.

Education To provide the Biblically-based learning opportunities that will stimulate Christian maturity and discipleship.

Ministry To witness and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, both individually and corporately, through a balanced program of Christian ministry.

Evangelism To seek to bring others into an ever-maturing knowledge of the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

Administration To recognize God's authority over the church in the administration of programs, personnel, and resources.

Article III

Section 5. Statement of Basic Belief

We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired word of God and the basis for our belief. We subscribe to the doctrinal statement of "The Baptist Faith and Message" as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963 and amended in 1998 by inclusion of article XVIII. THE FAMILY.

We voluntarily band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ, personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind.

The ordinances of this church are: Believer's Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Article IV

Section 6. Church Covenant

Since we have committed ourselves to Jesus Christ and have experienced the acceptance, forgiveness, and redemption of God our Father, we covenant together as members of the church that, with God's help through the guiding presence of His Spirit:

We will work together in brotherly love.

We will show loving care for one another and encourage, counsel, and admonish one another.

We will assemble faithfully for worship and fellowship and pray earnestly for others as well as for ourselves.

We will endeavor to bring up those under our care "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

We will seek, by Christian example and personal effort, to win others to Christ and to encourage their growth toward Christian maturity.

We will share one another's joys and endeavor to bear one another's burdens and sorrow.

We will oppose all conduct which compromises our Christian faith and will uphold high standards of Christian morality.

We will prove the reality of our conversion by living godly, fruitful lives.

We will maintain a faithful ministry of worship, witness, education, fellowship, and service.

We will be faithful stewards of our resources and abilities in sharing the gospel with people of all nations.

As a result of this covenant relationship, we will seek earnestly to live to the Glory of God, who brought us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

BYLAWS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Article I. Membership

General

This is an independent and democratic Baptist church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of the church.

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership. Members of mission *chapels* sponsored by this church shall be accorded all rights as members of this church.

Qualifications

The membership of this church shall consist of such persons as confess Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord, have undergone baptism as defined in the Baptist Faith and Message and have been accepted into the membership.

Duties

Members are expected to be faithful in all duties essential to the Christian life, to attend the services of this church, to give regularly for its support and cause, and to share in its organized work.

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 church service for membership in any of the following ways:

1. By profession of faith and for believer's baptism according to the policies of this church.
2. By promise of a letter of recommendation from another church of like faith and order.
3. By statement of prior conversion experience and baptism in a church of like faith and order when no letter is obtainable.

Rights of Members

1. Every member of this church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference provided the member is present.
2. Every member of the church is eligible for consideration by the membership as a candidate for any elective office in the church provided they meet qualifications specific to the office.

Termination of Membership

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

1. Death of a member.
2. Joining another church.
3. Exclusion by action of this church, whether for discipline, inactivity, or other just cause.
4. Erasure from the membership roll upon request by the member whose name is to be erased.

Discipline

It shall be the practice of this church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The pastor and other members of the church staff and deacons are available for counsel and guidance. The attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by concern for redemption rather than punishment.

Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, the pastor and deacons will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accord with Matthew 18. If it becomes necessary for the church to take action to exclude a member, a majority vote of the members present at a regular or special business meeting for which notice has been given is required and the church may proceed to declare the person to be no longer in the membership of the church. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance. Upon the request of an excluded person and upon evidence of repentance and reformation, the church, by a majority vote of the members present and voting, may restore to membership any person previously excluded.

Article II. Church Officers

All who serve as officers of this church and those who serve on church committees and as leaders in church program organizations shall be members of this church. Exceptions to this membership requirement may be made on a case-by-case basis, provided the candidate is recommended by the nominating committee, approved by the pastor, and receives a 2/3 vote of the membership at any regular or special business meeting.

The scriptural officers of this church shall be the pastor and deacons. The business officers of this church for legal purposes shall be the trustees, clerk, and treasurer.

The Pastor

A. Duties of the Pastor

1. The pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament Church in achieving its mission.
2. The pastor shall have charge of the welfare and oversight of the church.
3. The pastor shall be the leader of the pastoral care ministries of the church.
4. The pastor shall serve as an ex-officio member of all regular and special committees, boards, and councils of the church.
5. The pastor shall preside at all worship services and meetings of the church except as otherwise herein stated.

B. Selection of a Pastor

A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy in the office occurs.

1. Qualifications

The candidate shall be divinely called to the gospel ministry. The candidate shall have been ordained to the gospel ministry. The candidate shall meet Biblical qualifications as presented in I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and I Peter 5:1-4.

2. The Pastor Search Committee

- a. Upon the declaration that the office of pastor is vacant, a Pastor Search Committee shall be elected by the church at a special business meeting called for that purpose.

- b. The committee shall consist of eight (8) members. The nominating committee will nominate seven (8) persons willing to serve, striving to present a slate of candidates representative of the church in age, special commitments or interactions, and length of membership. The congregation shall elect seven (8) members and elect a chair and vice-chair.
- c. The Pastor Search Committee shall seek a suitable candidate and their recommendation shall constitute a nomination. Only one candidate shall be presented to the church at a time.
- d. The Pastor Search Committee shall select and invite the candidate to visit the church on an appropriate Sunday to preach in both services and to fellowship with the members.
- e. The Pastor Search Committee shall notify the church by first class mail of their recommendation and of the date of a special business meeting to consider the candidate for election to the office of pastor.

3. Election of a Pastor

Election shall be by ballot at the special business meeting. An affirmative vote of four-fifths (4/5) of those present and voting shall declare the election of a pastor.

C. Vacating of the Office of Pastor

1. In the event of any of the following situations, a special business meeting shall be called for the purpose of declaring the office of pastor to be vacant:

a. Voluntary Termination

The pastor may relinquish the office by submitting a written notice of not less than thirty (30) calendar days to the church clerk who shall forward copies to the deacons who shall distribute copies to the members.

b. Involuntary Termination by Church Action

Matthew 18 will be applied to resolve any stated conflict difference between the pastor and the interest of the church.

- 1. The inability to resolve serious conflict difference relative to the interest of the church will result in the recommendation by the

deacons to call a special business meeting where the charges will be presented in written form.

2. A special business meeting shall be called if a written petition of dismissal, stating the charges against the pastor, is submitted to the chair of the deacons and signed by not less than one-third (1/3) of the resident members.
3. Public notification of the special business meeting shall be by a first class mailing to the church family not less than seven (7) days before the meeting.
4. The moderator for this meeting shall be elected by the members present by majority vote and shall be someone other than the pastor. The chair of the deacons or the chair's designee, shall preside until the moderator is elected.
5. The vote to vacate the office of pastor shall be by secret ballot. A majority vote of the members present and voting shall be necessary to declare the office vacant.
6. The chair of the deacon body or the chair's designee shall immediately inform the pastor of the decision of the church. Severance pay, as is appropriate, may be considered by the church at a special business meeting.

The Ministerial Staff

The ministerial staff shall be called and employed as the church determines the need for such offices. Ministerial staff shall be under the general direction of the pastor. Other church employees shall be under the general direction of the pastor or appropriate committee.

The Deacons

Qualifications of Deacons

A deacon shall meet the biblical qualifications as set out in Acts 6:1-7, I Peter 5:1-3, I Timothy 3:8-13, I Timothy 5:17-22, and Titus 1:6-9.

A. Duties of Deacons

1. The deacons shall strive to advise and assist the pastor and to preserve the unity of the church.

2. Deacons are the spiritual leaders of the church and are responsible for the caring of members and their families and the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
3. Deacons shall not accept other positions in the church that will detract from their ability to carry out their deacon responsibilities.
4. In case of absence or inability of the pastor, subject to advice from and conference with him, the deacons shall provide for pulpit supply. In any period when the church is without a pastor, unless the church shall otherwise provide, the deacons will arrange the temporary securing of an interim pastor. The deacons shall in no way conflict with the work of the Pastor Search Committee.

B. Organization of Deacon Ministries

1. The number of deacons shall be sufficient to carry out the duties described above. The actual number shall be determined by the deacon body with the concurrence of the church. As a minimum, there shall be four (4) deacons for the first eighty (80) Midvale family units and one deacon for each additional twenty (20) family units or fraction thereof at the time of the annual business meeting.
2. The term of service for a deacon shall be three years beginning on January 1. Terms of service shall be staggered to insure continuity. No deacon shall be eligible for re-election for a period of one year after completing a full term of service. Any deacon elected to complete an unexpired term shall be eligible for re-election if the unexpired term is less than one-half (1/2) of a full term.

Upon the vacancy of a deacon position, there shall be a called deacon election in accordance with the following section on Election Process. The election process for filling unexpired terms shall be initiated expeditiously in order to fill the position in a timely manner.

3. The deacon chair is to be elected by the deacons for a term of one year, unless the deacons choose to rotate the deacon chair position on a monthly basis (deacon of the month).

C. Deacon Election Process

1. Deacon election shall be administered by the deacons in two steps: nomination and election. The deacon nomination-election process shall begin in October except when an unexpired deacon term is being filled. All deacon nomination-elections shall be made by secret ballot during a Sunday morning worship service. The nomination ballot shall have a blank space for each position to be elected.

Members may write in the name of the person they wish to nominate for each position to be filled.

2. The minimum number of votes required for nominations will be five (5) percent of the votes cast. Following nomination, the pastor and chair of the deacons will ascertain the willingness and qualification of nominees to serve in order of decreasing number of votes. The maximum number of nominees on the final ballot should be twice the number of positions to be filled. If the number of nominees willing to serve is less than the number of vacancies, the deacons shall determine whether another nomination-election should be attempted or if one or more vacancies will be allowed to continue.
3. Should a nominee or nominees receive more than 50% of the votes cast the nominee or nominees will be deemed elected without a second ballot. Otherwise, the names of the nominees will be placed on a ballot and the proper number of deacons shall be elected by secret ballot immediately during a Sunday morning worship service.
4. Following the election of an un-ordained person to deacon, the church shall call for ordination.

The Trustees

The church shall elect a minimum of three (3) trustees, each serving a three (3) year term beginning on January 1. Terms of service shall be staggered to insure continuity. Trustees shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected at the annual business meeting. A member shall not hold concurrent office of trustee if serving or elected as a deacon.

No trustee shall be eligible for re-election for a period of one year after completing a term of service. Any trustee elected to complete an unexpired term shall be eligible for re-election if the unexpired term is less than one-half (1/2) of a full term.

The trustees are the legal representatives of the church. They shall have the legal responsibility for the church property, but shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property of the church without a specific vote of the church authorizing such action.

The treasurer's report and records shall be audited annually by an auditing committee of the trustees or by a public accountant secured by the trustees.

The trustees shall have the power to organize themselves according to the needs of the church as a non-profit organization.

The Clerk

The church shall elect a clerk as its clerical officer. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a suitable record of all official actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a register of names of members, with dates of admission, transfer, death, or erasure, together with a record of baptisms. The clerk shall issue letters of transfer voted by the church and shall preserve on file all essential communications and written official reports. The clerk shall be responsible for preparing the annual letter of the church to the association. All church records, including financial records, are church property, although records may be kept in the personal computer of the clerk or an on-line database. Permanent records in paper format will be filed in the church office.

The Treasurer

The church shall elect a church treasurer and an assistant treasurer as its financial officers. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to preserve and pay out all money paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. The treasurer may pay or schedule for automatic payment routine budgeted line item expenses such as salaries, mission offerings, contractor expenses, and monthly invoices without further authorization, but non-routine invoices shall be paid based on vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel

All books, records, and accounts kept by the treasurer shall be the property of the church but records in computer form may be kept on the personal computer of the treasurer or on-line databases. The books shall be open for inspection at all times by any member of the church.

It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the church at each regular business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements of the preceding month. An annual report shall be presented at the end of the financial year. The treasurer's report and records shall be audited annually by an auditing committee of the trustees or public accountant. The treasurer shall be bonded at the church's expense.

Upon rendering the annual account at the end of each fiscal year and its acceptance and approval by the church, the records shall be delivered by the treasurer to the trustees for auditing and upon completion of the audit, the report shall be delivered to the church clerk who shall keep and preserve the audit report as part of the permanent records of the church.

The Financial Secretary

The financial secretary shall be elected annually. The financial secretary shall receive the contribution envelopes after the money has been removed and counted by the counting committee. The financial secretary shall keep a record of gifts from individuals. The envelopes shall be kept for reference of a period of five years after the end of the tax year.

It shall be the responsibility of the financial secretary to prepare and distribute statements annually (or quarterly by request) of contributions to date to all contributors. .

The financial secretary in conjunction with the counting committee shall assure that all records of personal financial giving shall be kept confidential at all times. All such records and pledges shall be kept confidential and shall not be divulged for any reason.

The Moderator

The moderator of all church meetings shall be the pastor, unless herein otherwise stated. In the absence of the pastor, the chair of the deacons shall serve as moderator. In the absence of both, the clerk shall call the meeting to order and a moderator pro tem shall be elected.

Article III. Committees /Teams (either term may be used)

The committees of this church shall be a nominating committee, a stewardship committee, a missions committee, a building and grounds committee, a constitution and bylaws committee, a counting committee, and other such standing or special committees as the church may desire.

Committees shall have the authority to operate and function within their assigned areas as defined in this constitution and bylaws, in the Church Operations Manual, or as ordered and directed by the church. Any decision or action by a committee shall be subject to review and revision by the church.

Committee members shall be elected for a three year term. Terms of members of each committee shall be staggered to insure continuity. Term of office shall begin on January 1, except for terms filled due to vacancies. Committee chairs shall be elected by the committee or team and shall serve for a one-year term.

Nominating Committee

The nominating committee shall consist of a minimum of three (3) members and, unlike other committees, shall be appointed by the pastor at the September business meeting.

The nominating committee coordinates the staffing of all church leadership positions filled by volunteer workers, unless otherwise specified herein. Persons considered for any such position shall first be approved by the nominating committee before they are approached for recruitment. The nominating committee shall present to the church for election all who accept the invitation to serve. There shall be additional opportunity provided for nominations from the floor for any position, unless otherwise specified herein.

As per Section 8 of this article, the nominating committee shall act as a committee on committees.

Stewardship Committee

The purpose of the stewardship committee shall be to develop in the church an understanding and commitment to the biblical concepts of individual and corporate stewardship. The committee will utilize all functions of the church including worship, ministry, proclamation, education, and application to accomplish its objective.

The stewardship committee oversees, develops, and recommends a unified church budget. In addition to two (2) elected members, the following shall serve as ex officio members of the stewardship committee: the church treasurer, the assistant treasurer, the financial secretary, and a trustee representative.

Missions Committee

The missions committee seeks to discover possibilities for mission projects, shares findings with the church program organizations, and serves the church in researching, establishing, and conducting such mission projects as may be assigned to it.

Building and Grounds Committee

The building and grounds committee is responsible for the maintenance of the properties, facilities, equipment, and furnishings of the church. The committee will work in cooperation with the trustees to assure the proper care and maintenance of all church properties. The committee shall cooperate with the pastor in the supervision of employees or contractors. The committee shall schedule all routine and seasonal clean-up and repair days. The committee shall strive to assure the safety and comfort of those using the facilities and property of the church.

Constitution and Bylaws Committee

The constitution and bylaws committee shall serve as a standing committee in all matters related to this constitution and bylaws and the Church Operations Manual (see Article

V.). Suggested amendments to this Constitution and Bylaws shall first be submitted to the constitution and bylaws committee for discussion and assessment before being presented to the church for action in a business meeting. The committee shall annually review this constitution and bylaws to determine if any changes are needed in relationship to the needs and growth of this church.

Counting Committee

The counting committee shall count all offerings and deposit the funds into the church checking account. The counting committee shall be nominated by the nominating committee and shall function as a sub-committee of the stewardship committee.

Other Committees

The nominating committee shall act as a committee on committees and shall be responsible for recommending to the church additional committees as needed or the addition of responsibilities to existing committees. Committees not specifically described in this Constitution and Bylaws may be added or deleted by the congregation at any regular or special business meeting called for that purpose.

Article IV. Church Finances

This church recognizes and adopts the scriptural method of "Tithes and Offerings" as its plan of finance.

Budget

The stewardship committee shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by line items the amount needed and sought for all local and other expenses.

Accounting Procedures

All funds received for any and all purposes shall pass through the counting committee and be properly recorded on the books of the church by the treasurer and on individual giving receipt records by the financial secretary. All giving records shall be and remain confidential. Those who have responsibility that involves the actual handling of funds shall be bonded, the church paying for the bond.

Fiscal Year

The church fiscal year shall be January 1 through December 31.

Expenditures

All expenditure requests must comply with the established policies and procedures of this church as stated in the Church Operations Manual. The stewardship committee shall have authority to spend up to two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500.00) for emergency purposes not otherwise allocated in the budget.

All bills should be paid when due. Money designated in the budget for denominational and mission causes shall be paid monthly before all other expenditures.

Mission and Special Offerings

No special offerings other than love offerings and the regular denominational mission offerings (such as Lottie Moon Christmas Offering , Annie Armstrong Easter Offering , Care and Share Offering , Association Missions Offering, and World Hunger Offering) shall be taken except upon vote of the church in business meeting. Individuals may make designated gifts at any time according to the policies and procedures of this church.

Article V. Church Operations Manual

The constitution and bylaws committee shall develop a church operations manual. The manual shall be kept in the church office and made available to any member of the church.

The constitution and bylaws committee shall review the manual at least once annually with the authority to recommend changes for the church to consider. Any church member or church organization may initiate suggested changes in the manual.

Article VI. Church Worship Services and Business Meetings

Worship Services

The usual times for public worship services shall be morning and evening on each Sunday and on a regular week day evening.

Regular Business Meetings

There shall be a regular monthly business meeting.

Reception of Members and Election of Messengers

At any regular worship service, the church may act upon the reception of members and upon the appointment of messengers to denominational meetings, but not upon other business.

Special Business Meetings

The pastor may, when he deems necessary or when requested by the deacons, the trustees, or a standing committee, call from the pulpit for a special business meeting the particular object of which is clearly stated in the call.

Unless herein otherwise provided, special business meetings may also be called by the clerk upon the written application of five or more adult members specifying the object thereof.

Calls for special business meetings shall be read at a Sunday morning worship service at least three days preceding such meetings.

Annual Business Meeting

An annual business meeting shall be held at the time of the regular January business meeting.

Robert's Rules of Order

The current publication of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern all business meetings of this church.

Quorum

A quorum shall consist of those members present and voting at any regularly scheduled business meeting, annual meeting, or called business meeting.

Article VII. Amendments

This constitution and bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting at any annual business meeting or at a meeting especially called for that purpose, the proposed amendment having been inserted in the call.