

CONSTITUTION OF FREEDOM HILL COMMUNITY CHURCH

STOW, OHIO

Adopted August 9, 1970

PREAMBLE

We declare and establish this constitution for the preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and that this body may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with teachings of the New Testament. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body in its relation to other churches, and the denomination.

ARTICLE I NAME, PURPOSE, AND INCORPORATION

Section 1. Name

The name of this church shall be Freedom Hill Community Church, Stow, Ohio, affiliated with the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio and with the Southern Baptist Convention.

Section 2. Purpose

It's purpose shall be:

- (A) To carry out the Great Commission of the Lord Jesus Christ as recorded in Matthew 28:10-20; Mark 16:15; and Acts 1:8:
- (B) To preach the truth of God revealed in the Bible, and
- (C) To develop Christian fellowship among the members and to encourage their growth in the grace and knowledge of Christ.

Section 3. Incorporation

This church shall be incorporated in accordance with the laws governing religious organizations in the state of Ohio.

ARTICLES II STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God and is the basis for any statement of faith. The church subscribes

to the current doctrinal statement of the “Baptist Faith and Message” of the Southern Baptist Convention. We dedicate ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ individually committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind. The ordinances of the church are baptism and the Lord’s Supper.

ARTICLE III CHURCH COVENANT

We, having been led by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Lord, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, do now in the presence of God, and this assembly most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We pledge by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also pledge to maintain family and personal devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk righteously in the world; to be honest in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to keep our body and mind clear by avoiding all harmful attitudes and actions which would dull our senses and harm our bodies, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Saviour.

We further pledge to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian love and compassion in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Saviour to secure harmony without delay.

We pledge that when we move from this place of Christian service we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principle of God’s Word.

ARTICLE IV CHARACTER

Section 1. Policy

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches. In so far as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the Summit Baptist Association, the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Section 2. Doctrine

This church receives the scriptures as its sole authority in matters of faith and practice and is in accord with the belief of the Baptist churches as indicted in the Church Covenant.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE V MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Qualifications

a. The membership of this church shall be composed of all persons who have given evidence of regeneration and have experienced New Testament baptism by immersion, have subscribed to the covenant and constitution of this church.

b. A member of another Baptist church of like faith may join upon promise of a letter from that church.

c. Anyone who has once been a member of a Baptist church, and because of peculiar circumstances, including dismissal, may be received into our fellowship upon a statement satisfactory to the church.

Section 2. Duties

Members are expected to be faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian life; and also to attend regularly the scheduled services of this church and to share joyfully in its total support.

Section 3. TERMINATION

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

- a. Death
- b. Dismission
- c. Affiliation with a church of another faith or denomination
- d. Personal request – church or individual

No person's membership shall be terminated at the meeting when the recommendation for action is made except by letter or death.

ARTICLE VI CHURCH OFFICERS

All church officers must be members of the church and will be elected annually, except the Pastor, Trustees and Deacons. The officers of this church shall be as follows:

Section 1. Pastor

The pastor is responsible for leading the church in functioning as a New Testament church. The pastor will lead the congregation, the organizations, and the church staff in performing their tasks. The pastor is the leader of worship, proclamation, education, and pastoral ministries.

A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. His election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose. At least one week's public notice shall be given.

A committee shall be appointed by the church to seek out a suitable pastor and its recommendations will constitute a nomination. Any member has the privilege of making other nominations according to the policy established by the church. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one man at a time. Election shall be by ballot. An affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present is necessary for a choice. The pastor shall serve until the relation is terminated by his request or the church's request. He shall preside at meetings of the church. The pastor is requested to give a least two weeks notice at the time of resignation

before terminating his responsibilities as pastor. The church's responsibility to the pastor is in the current church handbook.

Section 2. Church Staff

This church shall call or employ such staff members as the church shall need. A job description shall be written when the need for staff members is determined. Vocational staff members other than the pastor shall be recommended to the church by the personnel committee and employed by church action.

The church's responsibility to staff members is in the current church handbook.

Section 3. Deacons

a. The church may have 4 Deacons for the first one hundred members. One additional Deacon may be added for every fifty members. Deacons shall be elected in a business meeting of the church.

The Deacons shall serve on a rotation basis. Each year the term of office of one third of the number of deacons shall expire, and election shall be held to fill the vacancies. In case of death, or removal, or incapacity to serve, the church may elect to fill the unexpired term. After serving a term of three years, no deacon shall be eligible for re-election until the lapse of at least one year. There is no obligation to constitute as an active deacon a person who comes to the church from another church where he has served as a deacon.

b. In accordance with the meaning of the work and the practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. The task of the deacons is to serve with the pastor in performing pastoral ministries tasks: Proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers; care for the church members and other persons; lead the church to engage in a fellowship of worship, witness, education, ministry, and application; and lead the church in performing its tasks.

Section 4. Moderator

The moderator shall be the pastor. In the absence of the pastor, the chairman of deacons shall preside; or in the absence of both, the clerk shall call the church to order and an acting moderator shall be elected.

Section 5. Clerk

The church clerk shall keep in a suitable book a record of all the actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. The clerk is responsible for keeping a register of the names of members with dates of admission, dismissal, or death, together with a record of baptisms. The clerk shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church, preserve on file all communications and written records. The church may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to a church secretary. All church records are church property and should be filed in the church office when one is maintained.

Section 6. Treasurer

It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out, upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel, all money, or things of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements for the preceding month. The treasurer's report shall be audited annually by an auditing committee or public accountant.

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 church clerk, who shall keep and preserve the account as a part of the permanent records.

Section 7. Financial Secretary

The financial secretary shall be secured by the church. The secretary shall receive the empty collection envelopes after the money has been removed and counted by the proper persons selected by the church; and from these shall give donors individual credit. The secretary shall keep the envelopes for reference for a period of two years. The secretary will fill out the sheet for the monthly balance, which will indicate receipts from envelopes, plate or loose, and miscellaneous or special offerings. The secretary shall be responsible for preparing and distributing records of contributions to all contributors.

Section 8. Church Ushers

Every regular church usher shall be selected by the nominating committee and elected by the

church. The ushers shall be directed by the chairman of the ushers. The ushers are to greet people as they enter and leave the church, seat people at the proper time, provide bulletins, and/or other materials at the time of seating. The ushers will be attentive to the needs of the congregation and the pastor.

Section 9. Church Council

(1) The primary functions of the council shall be to recommend to the congregation suggested objectives and church goals; to review and coordinate program plans recommended by church officers, organizations, and committees; to recommend to the congregation the use of leadership, calendar time, and other resources according to program priorities; and to evaluate program achievements in terms of church goals and objectives.

(2) The council, unless otherwise determined by vote of the church, shall have as regular members, the pastor, appropriate staff members, chairman of the deacons and the director or leader of each church organization. Committee chairmen and church-elected officers may serve as ex-officio members.

(3) All matters agreed upon by the council, calling for action not already authorized, shall be referred to the church for approval or disapproval.

Section 10. Trustees

Three trustees elected by the church will be responsible for the legal details concerning the church property. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without a specific vote of the church authorizing each action. Trustees shall serve on a rotating basis.

ARTICLE VII COMMITTEES

Section 1. Baptism Committee

The Baptism committee is elected to assist in preparing for the ordinance of baptism. The committee is responsible for preparing the candidates and the baptistery for the ordinance.

Section 2. Flower Committee

The flower committee is responsible for securing, arranging, and disposing of floral arrangements for church services, and for providing flowers for bereaved members.

Section 3. History Committee

The history committee is to preserve and use the historical records of the church. The committee is especially concerned with gathering and preserving available church records, recording full and accurate records and using the records to help members understand and appreciate their heritage and mission.

Section 4. Lord's Supper Committee

The Lord's Supper committee prepares the elements and the equipment for the observance of the Lord's Supper. The committee does the preparatory and maintenance work needed to observe the memorial service. The committee will prepare the elements on a schedule approved by the church.

Section 5. Nominating Committee

The nominating committee coordinates the staffing of all church leadership positions filled by volunteers. The nominating committee recommends persons for all volunteer positions to be elected by the church.

Section 6. Personnel Committee

The personnel committee assists the church in matters related to employed personnel administration. It's work includes such areas as staff needs, employment, salaries, benefits, and personnel services.

Section 7. Properties Committee

The properties committee assists the church in matters related to properties administration. Its work includes such areas as maintaining all church properties for ready use, recommending policies regarding use of properties, recommending employment of maintenance personnel, and adding responsibility to appropriate personnel for supervision.

Section 8. Nursery Committee

The nursery committee is to coordinate the church's nursery activities and to help nursery parents and teachers work together. The committee will see that adequate provisions are made for nursery children each time they are at church.

Section 9. Benevolence Committee

The benevolence committee is to perform acts of benevolence to persons in need in the name of Christ and His church.

Section 10. Kitchen Committee

The kitchen committee is responsible for formulating and recommending to the church, policies for the kitchen and for communicating these policies to church members.

Section 11. Stewardship Committee

The stewardship committee develops and recommends an overall stewardship plan using sound principles of financial management.

Section 12. Missions Committee

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

Section 13. Recreation Committee

The recreation committee will serve the church in seeing that all recreation activities sponsored by the church or any organizational unit are properly planned and that they contribute to the ultimate objectives of the church.

Section 14. Public Relations Committee

The public relations committee is to know and discover the public relations needs and choose the means

of communication to the persons inside and outside the church. The committee is responsible for discovering what needs to be communicated and to communicate with the proper audience.

ARTICLE VIII PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONS

Section 1. General

All organizations of the church shall be under church control, all directors being elected by the church and reporting regularly to the church. It is understood that the pastor is an ex-officio officer of all the organizations named, and his leadership is to be recognized in them.

Section 2. Sponsoring

The church shall sponsor such organizations as contribute to the upbuilding of the church. Directors of organizations shall give a report at monthly business meetings. The basic curricular source will be Southern Baptist Literature.

ARTICLE IX CHURCH MEETINGS

Section 1. Worship Services

The church shall meet regularly each Lord's Day for preaching, instruction, evangelism, and for the worship of Almighty God, conduct Bible Study and prayer services weekly. These meetings will be open to the entire membership of the church and for all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor. It shall also allow meetings that will foster spiritual development of its members. Time of services and changes thereof shall be voted upon by the church.

Section 2. Business Meetings

- (a) Regular business meetings shall be held monthly. Should there be any unusual business or matter of unusual interest to be brought before such regular monthly meeting, notice shall be given the membership one week prior to the meeting.

- (b) Special Business Meetings

The pastor may, and shall, when requested by the deacons, trustees, or a standing committee, call

special business meetings, the particular object of the meeting being clearly stated in the notice. Special meetings of the church may also be called by the clerk upon the written application of any five adult members specifying the object thereof. Notice of all special meetings shall be read at the worship service on the Lord's Day prior to such meetings.

(c) Quorum

The quorum consists of those who attend the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called.

(d) Parliamentary Rules

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church.

(e) Voting Privileges

All members are entitled to vote at any church meeting.

(f) Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the church shall run concurrently with the church year which begins on October 1 and ends on September 30.

ARTICLE X CHURCH FINANCES

Section 1. The stewardship committee, in consultation with the church council, shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by items the amount needed and sought for all local and worldwide expenses. The membership in this church involves financial obligation to support the church and its causes with regular, proportionate gifts.

Plans will be made annually to subscribe the budget.

ARTICLE XI DISCIPLINE

Section 1: Should any unhappy differences arise among 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 correct the offense; and if this effort fails, shall report the case to the church.

Section 3: 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.

Section 4: Any person whose membership has been terminated for any offense may be restored by vote of the church, upon evidence of his repentance and reformation; upon satisfactory explanation.

ARTICLE XII AMENDEMENTS

Changes in this constitution and by laws may be made at any regular and or business meeting of the church, provided such amendments have been presented in writing at a previous church meeting and copies of the proposed amendment have been furnished to all members of the church. Amendments to the constitution shall be by two-thirds vote of all members of the church present entitled to vote; amendments to the bylaws shall have a concurrence of a majority of the members present and voting.

Amendment #1

Adopted at Business Meeting January, 2016

STATEMENT OF FAITH

Freedom Hill Community Church believes the Holy Bible is the inspired and perfect Word of God that speaks with absolute authority concerning truth, morality and the proper conduct of mankind as well as the sole and final source of all we believe. We dedicate ourselves as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ individually committed to sharing the Good News of salvation to lost mankind. Freedom Hill Community Church demonstrates faith by practicing the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. This statement of faith does not exhaust the scope of our beliefs. Additionally, Freedom Hill Community Church subscribes to the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message of the Southern Baptist Convention (See appendix A). For the purposes of Freedom Hill Community Church's faith, doctrine,

practice, policy, and discipline, our pastor is Freedom Hill's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.