

**Milan Baptist
Church
Milan, Michigan**

Constitution

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ARTICLE 1 - NAME

This church shall be known as the “Milan Baptist Church of Milan, Michigan,” under which name we are incorporated as an ecclesiastical body in the State of Michigan.

When signatures are required following the sanction of action which has been approved by the church membership, the Chairman of the Board of Deacons is to sign any papers as president, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees as vice-president, and the Clerk as secretary.

ARTICLE 2 - CHARACTER

SECTION 1 - POLICY

Its government is vested in the body of believers of whom it is composed. It is subject to no earthly authority but rather to God and His Word.

SECTION 2 - DOCTRINE

1. We believe, without reservation, in the divine authority and verbal inspiration of the whole of the Old and New Testaments as originally written. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:21; Matthew 5:18).
2. We believe in the eternal trinity, one God in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; I Timothy 3:16; John 1:1; John 10:31-33; 2 Corinthians 3:17).
3. We believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate. (John 1:1, 14, I Timothy 3:16, Hebrews 2:9, 16). That He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. (Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:20, Luke 1:35).
4. We believe that through disobedience to God, Adam incurred the penalties of physical and spiritual death which passed upon the whole human race. (Romans 3:23; Romans 5:12-14, Ephesians 2:1, I Corinthians 15:22).
5. We believe that Jesus Christ died for our sins through the shedding of His blood that He was raised again for our justification, and that by Him all that believe are justified from all eternal penalty of sin and its accompanying guilt and therefore have eternal life. (Hebrews 9:22; Romans 4:25; I Corinthians 15:3; Acts 13:38-39; John 5:24, Romans 6:23).
6. We believe that a person who is a born again Christian, as part of the sanctification process, will evidence a life of separation from sin. (Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:17-24; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-7; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 3:4-14).
7. We believe in the new birth through the operation of the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 1:13; Romans 8:11; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14).
8. We believe that Jesus Christ rose from the dead on the third day, later ascended into Heaven and is now our Advocate with the Father in heaven. (Luke 24:6, 7; John 20:9, 16; I John 2:1,2; Romans 10:9; Hebrews 4:14-16).
9. We believe in the eternal salvation of all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and the endless punishment of all those who do not believe and reject Him. (Matthew 8:11, 12; John 3:16-18, 36, 10:27-28; Acts 16:31; Revelation 20:15; Romans 10:9, 10, 13; Isaiah 66:24).
10. We believe in the pre-tribulational rapture of the Church and the pre-millennial return of the Lord, personally and visibly, to institute the promised Kingdom. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Acts 1:11; Isaiah 9:6, 7, 11:1-9; Revelation 20:4-6; 1 Corinthians 15:50-54).
11. We believe in the bringing in of a new heaven and earth as the final state. (2 Peter 3:7-13, Revelation 21-22, Isaiah 65:17, 66: 22-24).

SECTION 3 – THE BIBLE AND PRAYER

God has revealed Himself to humanity in many ways, one of the most important of which is the Bible, consisting of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments. God also desires in His grace that we communicate with Him. This is one of the greatest blessings provided to us as Christians. Not only do prayer and Bible study provide encouragement, strength, and growth in one's personal relationship with God, but they also provide the guidance needed in order to better understand His will. Prayer and Bible study play a vital role in the life of the Christian, both as an individual and as part of the Body of Christ. God, through the Holy Spirit, uses prayer in conjunction with His Word, to reveal His Truth to His children, provide them with the discernment to understand it, and the faith to apply it. Therefore, we at Milan Baptist Church believe it is absolutely imperative that every aspect of both personal and corporate life be conducted prayerfully, in conformance with the Scriptures, and in full submission to the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.

ARTICLE 3 - OBJECT OF THE CHURCH

The object of this church shall be:

1. **Worship:**

Elevating God's Kingdom by obedience to His Word and the sacrificial giving of our lives to His worship.

2. **Fellowship - Koinonia:**

The mutual sharing of and in each other's lives. This sharing involves three things:

- a. it includes all believers (Acts 2:44),
- b. it holds believers together by promoting unity (Acts 2:44), and
- c. it meets the needs of believers (Acts 2:45). It is the expression of genuine Christianity freely shared among the members of God's family.

3. **Evangelism:**

The presentation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world at home and abroad through an obedient and humble style, and the active communication of God's Word.

4. **Prayer:**

An intimate communication with God whereby we seek to understand His will for our lives. There is no sacred language or ritual which gets God's attention. Our all-knowing God responds to our entire lives, of which our prayers are merely a small part.

5. **Edification:**

The building up of the body of Christ by the teaching of and submission to the Word of God as our sole means of faith and practice. This includes the encouragement of one another to faith and good works.

6. **Communion:**

The remembering of the work of Christ in procuring our entire salvation through the breaking of His body to make us whole and the shedding of His blood to free us from the penalty and power of our sin.

ARTICLE 4 - MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1 - QUALIFICATIONS

Church membership consists of all such persons who have requested to be brought into membership and have met all of the following criteria:

1. Have confessed Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.
2. Have been baptized by immersion subsequent to their salvation. (Any exceptions must be approved by the Board of Deacons)
3. Have successfully completed the new members' course that includes the doctrine and constitution of the church.
4. Have been examined and approved by the pastor and the Board of Deacons as to their Christian experience and other conduct, as well as their agreement with the doctrinal statement.

A potential new members list shall be presented to the congregation, so that they may bring before the deacons any knowledge of the new members that needs to be presented. At the earliest convenience, the new member(s) will be presented to the congregation for the right hand of fellowship.

SECTION 2 - DUTIES OF MEMBERS

Even though God saves each of us as an individual, He calls us also to be part of the Body of Christ. This universal body is made up of local church congregations, which in turn consist of each Believer coming together to fulfill the three-fold objective of the church:

1. Exaltation of God (Ephesians 1:4-6; 1 Peter 2:4-5,9)
2. Evangelization of the World (Matthew 28:18-20)
3. Edification of the Body (Ephesians 4:11-16; Colossians 1:28-29)

Exaltation, evangelism, and edification are accomplished as each person yields to the power of the Holy Spirit in his or her life in order to live as:

1. A Temple of the Holy Spirit as evidenced in:
 - a. Love and devotion to God
 - b. Prayer and worship
 - c. Obedience and holiness
 - d. Transformation into the likeness of Christ
 - e. Yearning for growth through regular study of the Word
2. A Servant to the Lost as evidenced in:
 - a. Living as salt and light
 - b. Loving them in word and deed
 - c. Presenting the gospel of truth
3. A Servant of the Body as evidenced in:
 - a. Regular participation in the corporate life of the church
 - b. Faithful exercising of ones spiritual gifts
 - c. Promoting of unity
 - d. Building up and encouraging of others
 - e. Stimulating to love and good works

- f. Forbearance and forgiveness
- g. Sacrificial and unconditional love

Voting:

All members in fellowship and agreement with us, having attained the age of sixteen, shall be entitled to a vote at all regular church business meetings in all matters that concern the work. Concerning legal matters, however, only members who have reached their legal age are entitled to vote. Absentee ballots may be requested from the Church Clerk.

Qualifications for all positions of service within the Milan Baptist Church:

Only active members of the Milan Baptist Church shall be allowed to fill Officers positions. A non-member may be considered for all other positions of service after due consideration of the Board of Deacons.

SECTION 3 – DISCIPLINE

The New Testament clearly gives what disciplinary action is to be taken by local churches under certain circumstances. Sin in any form, whether moral or doctrinal in character, is not to be allowed to continue in any local church. Some offenses are to be dealt with by the church; others are to be brought before the church only if a settlement cannot be made otherwise. It is well to keep in mind that local churches are not to make the rules for discipline but to act on scriptural instructions in behalf of Christ, the Head of the Church. When acting according to the Scriptures, the local church has the authority of Christ and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

The purpose of discipline in a New Testament church is to preserve unity among the assembly and restore sinning believers to fellowship with God and other believers. Revenge for wrongdoing is never to be the motive for discipline, and all discipline is to be administered in love. Note that this discipline is different from the discipline of the pastor and deacons; the particulars of which are laid out in Article 8.

The scriptural basis for church discipline is found in: (Matthew 18:15-20)

Steps:

1. If an individual feels he or she has been wronged by someone else or feels that another person is engaging in sinful behavior, the person should be approached in private and every attempt should be made to bring about repentance and reconciliation. If the matter cannot be resolved, the confronting individual will proceed to step 2.
2. The confronting individual will meet with the other person in the presence of one or two witnesses. They will then work together to attempt to bring about repentance and reconciliation. If the matter cannot be resolved, the confronting individual will proceed to step 3.
3. The confronting individual with the witnesses will bring the matter to the church body. The Board of Deacons, as the overseers of the local church, would then give the guilty party an opportunity to repent and make amends for his or her wrong. If the guilty party refuses to repent and seek reconciliation, then the final official step of discipline must be enforced. By this act of defiance, the guilty party is the one who brings about the outcome of the process. Therefore no majority vote is taken. At this point, the deacons will officially, before the congregation, require the guilty

party to remove him or herself from fellowship with the local congregation until such time as he or she understands the need for repentance and reconciliation and is willing to take the necessary steps to do so.

Please note that at any point in the entire discipline process, regardless of the outcome, the leaders and congregation will make every effort to work with the guilty party to ensure restoration and long-term spiritual growth in the area in question. There may be times that an accusation brought against someone is of a serious enough nature that it may be necessary for the church leadership to remove the accused from certain leadership positions or ministries until the accusation can be fully investigated. If the accusation is found to be true and the individual repents, it may still be necessary for that person to refrain from participating in certain ministries or leadership positions either temporarily or permanently. The Board of Deacons will ultimately be responsible for deciding whether this is necessary.

If the guilty party seeks repentance and reconciliation, the entire congregation (including the injured parties) shall follow the biblical example to accept the person back with love and forgiveness. The Scripture is always the source of instruction and authority for church discipline.

SECTION 4 – TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

By transfer – Members in good and regular standing who desire transfer to another church should request from the Board of Deacons that a letter of membership transfer be mailed to the church they desire to join.

By request – Members who desire to have their name removed from membership should request removal from the Board of Deacons.

By exclusion – Any member who clearly manifests disinterest and inactivity shall be admonished by the deacons of the church. If after due admonition, disinterest and inactivity continue, his/her name shall be submitted for termination to the deacons at a regularly convened meeting. With their recommendation of exclusion and the individual notified in writing, the deacons will instruct the Church Clerk to remove them from the membership list. The member may appeal to the deacons before final action is taken, if he/she so desires.

ARTICLE 5 - OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

SECTION 1 - NUMBER OF OFFICERS AND TERMS OF SERVICE

The church officers shall be pastor(s), Deacons (not to exceed six), Trustees (not to exceed) six, Clerk, Church Treasurer, Missionary Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and Sunday School Superintendent(s). All, but hired pastoral staff, must be active members in good standing for at least one year. All must meet all other qualifications of the respective offices as defined in this document.

Election of Officers:

The election of officers of the Church shall take place at the Annual Business Meeting of the Church, all elections being determined by the majority of votes cast.

Deacons:	3 years
Trustees:	3 years
Church Treasurer:	3 years
Missionary Treasurer:	3 years
Assistant Treasurer:	3 years
Sunday School Superintendent(s):	3 years
Clerk:	3 years

SECTION 2 - QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES OF OFFICERS

THE CHIEF SHEPHERD:

Jesus Christ, the one and only Son of God, is the sole head of the Milan Baptist Church. He is described in God's Word as the Chief Cornerstone, the Chief Shepherd, and the Head of the Church. Therefore Milan Baptist Church belongs without reservation to Him and Him alone. Christ ministers to the church through the enlightenment and empowerment of His Spirit. His immediate purpose is to empower the church to reach the lost with the ultimate objective of presenting itself to Him glorious, without any spot or wrinkle that would detract from Heaven's beauty. (Mark 12:10; Ephesians 1:22-23; Ephesians 2:20; Ephesians 5:23-27; Colossians 1:18; Acts 20:28).

UNDERSHEPERDS:

In order to fulfill His purposes for His church, Christ has placed men into leadership roles as under-shepherds. These men are not only called by Him, but are also ultimately accountable to Him. At Milan Baptist Church, the group of under-shepherds consists of the pastor (and all associate pastors) and the deacons. These under-shepherds work as a team overseeing the spiritual ministries of the church for the purpose of fulfilling the Ephesians 4:11-13 mandate of "equipping the saints for the work of service" for the purpose of promoting Christ-like unity and maturity within the body so that the church can reach the lost by being salt and light in a fallen world. The pastor(s) and deacons are accountable to one another as well as to the general congregation.

The pastoral staff at Milan Baptist Church will consist of a senior pastor and all associate pastors. The senior pastor and the associates will work together as a team along with the deacons in overseeing the spiritual ministries of the church. Because each Christian has been given different talents and spiritual gifts the pastoral staff and the deacons will work together under the

guidance of the Holy Spirit to focus each member of the team on those areas of ministry that would be most beneficial for the furtherance of the growth of the local body. The senior pastor and the chairman of the deacons will maintain coordination of the efforts of the pastoral staff and the deacons.

The senior pastor and all associates shall be called to the pastorate for an indefinite period. (See Article 7 for the Calling of pastor(s), and Article 8 for the Discipline of Pastors and Deacons).

QUALIFICATIONS FOR PASTORS AND DEACONS:

In order to equip the saints, the pastors and the deacons must be men who are above reproach with regard to the qualities of character and maturity as laid out in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-4. Being above reproach (blameless) does not refer to sinless perfection because in that case no human being would ever qualify for these positions. Instead, it can be defined as God's requirement that His under-shepherds maintain in good conscience a reputation (both in the church and in the community) for godliness and spiritual maturity. They are to provide a consistent example of holiness so that their lifestyles will not lead people astray or bring the ministry of the local church into disrepute. The above mentioned passages provide us with the characteristics of such a lifestyle. There is overlap within the lists so certain characteristics will be combined as appropriate:

1. Husband of one wife:
 - a. The literal Greek interpretation of this term is a "one-woman man". This has been interpreted a number of ways and deserves therefore some clarification.
 - b. It is **NOT** solely a reference to polygamy. This is forbidden to all men.
 - c. It is **NOT** a requirement that a pastor or deacon be married rather than single. If it were referring to this, Paul would have worded it "the husband of a wife".
 - d. It is **NOT** a requirement that a widower never remarry because Romans 7:1-6 makes it clear that the bonds of the marriage union end at the death of one of the mates.
 - e. It is the requirement that a pastor or deacon has never been divorced. The only two exceptions are if the wife was guilty of a pattern of sexual infidelity (Matthew 5:32) or was an unbeliever who deserted him (1 Corinthians 7:15). We take this view of "husband of one wife" because of the verses referenced above and for two additional reasons:
 - i. God holds the marital relationship to be unique and for life (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4-9) and has stated that He hates divorce (Malachi 2:16). If God's leaders are to lead the church by example, it is important that they demonstrate they hold marriage in that same high regard. God also makes it clear in the qualification passages that a man's ability to lead the church is evidenced in his ability to lead his family. Divorce would call these abilities into question, compromise his credibility, and violate the overriding requirement that such a man be above reproach.
 - ii. God has made the marriage a visible symbol of the relationship between Christ and His church (Ephesians 5:22-23). The Bible is clear that the leaders are to be Christ's under-shepherds. They are therefore visible examples in their relationship with the church of how, in turn, Christ relates to His church. Here again divorce would bring the ministry into disrepute and degrade the church's confidence in God's ministry to His people.

- f. It is faithfulness sexually and emotionally to one's wife. He is to be devoted to his wife and fulfill the requirements of loving his wife as Christ loved the church (Ephesians 5:25-30).
2. Be Temperate – The Greek means “alert, vigilant, and clear-headed, exhibits self-control in his desires, passions, and sensual appetites.” Such a man will be on his guard to protect the truth of the gospel and the spiritual well being of the church. He will evaluate his own life to ensure he remains able to do so.
3. Be Prudent – The Greek means “sensible and serious-minded”. He views himself and the world through God's eyes. This view dominates how he prioritizes his life and ministry and causes him to discipline his mind. He is cautious, thoughtful, and earnest.
4. Be Self-Controlled – The prudent man will discipline his mind and follow this with a disciplined and orderly life. This will help him to bring order to his ministries and the church as a whole.
5. Be Respectable – The Greek means “orderly and honorable”. He has earned the respect of Christians and non-Christians alike because he demonstrates a love for what is good and by showing evidence of the fruits of the Holy Spirit in his life.
6. Be Hospitable – The Greek means literally “to love strangers”. The home of such a man will be open to others so that he can demonstrate the love of Christ by meeting their needs.
7. Be Able To Teach – He must have the spiritual gift of teaching. In addition, he must be faithful in studying and understanding the Scriptures and have the courage to faithfully and effectively teach and protect the doctrines taught within them.
8. Not Addicted To Wine – Such a man will not allow alcohol or other intoxicating substances to control his life or impair his judgment. He will also be careful to protect his reputation in this area and be sensitive to the weaknesses and spiritual immaturity of others.
9. Not Pugnacious – The Greek means literally “not a striker”. He should not react to stress, difficulties, or conflict with aggressive and hurtful words or actions.
10. Be Gentle – Instead of being pugnacious, he should be considerate, compassionate, and quick to forgive.
11. Be Uncontentious. Not Quick-Tempered Or Self-Willed – He will be slow to anger and forbearing. He will promote peace within the church. He will not be quarrelsome and will not seek his own way without regard to others.
12. Be Free From The Love Of Money And Sordid Gain – He should not be in the ministry in order to make money. He has honesty and integrity. Money (or the lack thereof) should not have a hold of his life and attitudes, as would be evidenced by greed, stinginess, financial ambition, or a willingness to resort to immoral means in order to make money. He sees himself as a steward of the material things that God has blessed him with and uses them accordingly.
13. Be Just – Derives from the Greek word translated as “righteous”. He will use the divine standards of Scripture in his dealings with people. He will be fair and even-handed.
14. Be Devout – The Greek carries the idea of holiness. He will make every effort to live a life that is an example of holiness and total devotion to Christ. He will love and pursue what is good rather than what is evil.
15. Manage His Children And Household Well – He will be the spiritual leader of his home and provide a Godly and loving environment for his family. His wife (if applicable) will be a believer, who evidences the fruits of the Holy Spirit and is active in the ministries and fellowship of the local church. His children (if applicable) will be raised in the ways of the Lord, being obedient to their Lord, parents, and other

Godly leadership. The children will have also made decisions for the Lord at such an age that they are capable of feeling and following His call. In cases where a potential deacon has young children who have not yet accepted Christ or believing children who have momentarily stumbled, the under-shepherds will see that the children are progressing toward an obedient yielding to Him and will earnestly and prayerfully seek guidance from the Holy Spirit for the calling of that potential deacon.

16. Not A New Convert – The character traits listed above require time to develop. Placing a new Christian in such positions of leadership leaves him open to both discouragement and conceit, which would in time destroy his ability to lead.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PASTORS:

1. Preaching and teaching.
2. Regularly worship and participate in the ministries with the rest of the body and work with the worship ministry team in organizing the worship services.
3. Participate as a member of the Board of Deacons. For the establishment of his annual compensation package, the pastor(s) will excuse himself from its final determination.
4. Supervise the staff and oversee, in cooperation with the deacons, the leadership of various ministries of the church. The pastoral portion of oversight will consist of:
 - a. Understanding of the status and progress of the ministries
 - b. Encouragement and recommendations for personal growth of ministry leaders as well as growth of the ministry itself
 - c. Discipleship as needed
 - d. Resource in matter of doctrine
 - e. Counseling
5. General pastoral care:
 - a. Perform sacral duties
 - b. Short-term counseling
 - c. Periodic visitation of the church membership
 - d. Hospital visitation
6. In conjunction with the Board of Deacons, he shall protect the Milan Baptist Church Constitution and the doctrinal purity of the church by maintaining the Bible as the foundation of truth upon which the church will stand.
7. Coordinate discipleship efforts within the church to encourage individual growth in areas of personal spiritual maturity and outreach into the community. These efforts will include both personal example and teaching.
8. Together with the deacons prepare and examine Christians who wish to become members of the local body.
9. Participate in outside speaking opportunities as deemed appropriate by the Board of Deacons. These opportunities should not be in conflict with the Pastor's responsibilities or the Church doctrinal statement.
10. Participate in and encourage the growth of domestic and overseas missions.
11. Preside over the church board.
12. Preside over the Annual Business Meeting.
13. Personal and professional development:
 - a. Bible study and prayer
 - b. Continued education
 - c. Networking with other pastors
 - d. Conference attendance
14. Mutual ministry with the deacons:

- a. Meet regularly with the deacons to understand the status and progress of their ministries
 - b. Encouragement
 - c. Resource for ministry support
 - d. Conflict resolution
 - e. Accountability
15. Pastor(s) have signature authority for expenditures by the ministries of the church as defined in Article 9.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEACONS:

1. Oversee and coordinate the leadership of the various ministries of the church. This will be done in cooperation with the pastoral staff. The portion of oversight performed by the deacons will consist of:
 - a. Understanding of the status and progress of the ministries
 - b. Encouragement and recommendation for personal growth of ministry leaders as well as growth of the ministry itself
 - c. Discipleship as needed
 - d. Resource in matters of doctrine
 - e. Counseling
 - f. Establishment of budgetary requirements for ministries
 - g. Discipline and conflict resolution of church leadership according to article 8.
 - h. Establishment of direction for ministry direction and strategy for the church
 - i. Review and approve proposed ministry leaders who are not church members
2. Church conflict resolution and discipline
3. Mutual ministry with the pastoral staff:
 - a. Meet regularly with the pastoral staff to understand the status and progress of their ministries
 - b. Encouragement
 - c. Resource for ministry support
 - d. Conflict resolution
 - e. Accountability.
4. Preach and teach as needed.
5. Counseling.
6. Visitation (home and hospital).
7. Discipleship.
8. Member of the pulpit committee.
9. Setup and serving of the Lord's Supper.
10. Attend all meeting of the Board of Deacons, Church Board, and the Annual Business Meeting.
11. Review and approve all requests for missionary support.
12. Prepare the annual budget with the support of the leaders of the church ministries and present the budget at the Annual Business meeting for congregational approval.
13. Establish the compensation packages for the paid church staff with the exclusion of the staff under the Board of Trustees (including pastoral). The pastoral staff will excuse themselves from final determination of the pastoral compensation packages.
14. Call, appoint, and direct the activities of the constitutional review committee.
15. Examine and approve candidates for church membership.
16. The membership list will be revised and approved by the Board of Deacons on an annual basis.

17. In conjunction with the pastoral staff, they shall protect the Milan Baptist Church Constitution and the doctrinal purity of the church by maintaining the Bible as the foundation of truth upon which the church will stand.
18. Participate in the Deacon Caring Ministry.
19. Coordinate discipleship efforts within the church to encourage individual growth in areas of personal spiritual maturity and outreach into the community. These efforts will include both personal example and teaching.
20. Regularly worship and participate in the ministries with the local church body.
21. Personal spiritual development through Bible study and prayer.
22. Chairman has signature authority for expenditures by the ministries of the church as defined in Article 9.
23. The Board of Deacons will consist of all pastoral staff, a chairman (who will not be a member of the pastoral staff), a secretary, and no more than four additional deacons. The chairman and secretary must be currently one of the sitting elected deacons, and elected annually by the current members.
24. One more than half of the currently sitting Board of Deacons including the pastoral staff will constitute a quorum for decision-making purposes.
25. Because of the need to maintain unity all decisions must be unanimous.

TRUSTEES:

He or she shall be called to this office for the care and maintenance of all property owned by the Church.

QUALIFICATIONS

1. Be an active member in good standing.
2. Holding the Word of God in a pure conscience.
3. Serious minded concerning spiritual things.
4. Honest and truthful.
5. Be sober not drunk.
6. Have not the love of money in their heart.
7. Hold confidences.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Perform duties of a member.
2. Attend all Board of Trustees meetings and all relevant Church meetings.
3. All trustees are members of the Board of Trustees and annually elect a chairman and a secretary. The chairman and secretary must be currently sitting elected trustees. The Board of Trustees shall not exceed six members.
4. Account for, care for, and maintain all Church properties which consist of and are not limited to church buildings and grounds, furnishings, equipment, vehicles, insurance, and hiring and firing custodians.
5. Ordering cleaning and maintenance supplies.
6. Responsible for providing a budget in regards to the care and maintenance of church property and submitting it to the deacons in preparation for the Annual Business Meeting.

CLERK:

QUALIFICATIONS

1. Honest—truthful.
2. A believer who has shown spiritual maturity in the course of their life.
3. Must be of legal age (18) or older.
4. An active member of Milan Baptist Church who is in full agreement with its doctrinal statement.
5. A person who has evidenced leadership abilities and who works well with others.
6. Must have the ability to keep business matters confidential.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Attend all Church Board meetings (regular and special), all business meetings including the Annual Meeting; and keep a complete record of all those meetings of the church and their proceedings, which shall be read for approval at the next business meeting of the church. Minutes should be compiled and available within 30 days unless otherwise specified.
2. He, or she, shall keep a register of names of members with the dates of admission, transfer, death, and record of baptisms.
3. The Clerk shall issue letters of dismissal of members as directed by the Board of Deacons.
4. The Clerk shall send and receive all letters of transfer of membership as directed by the Board of Deacons.
5. Provide Absentee Ballots for all business meetings.
6. The Clerk will also have knowledge of where the historical documents of the church are kept. Access to the historical documents should be obtained through the Clerk.
7. Will use computers and computer software(s) to handle the various aspects of the Clerk's responsibilities.

CHURCH TREASURER:

The Church Treasurer shall receive and keep account of all monies received, such as Sunday offerings and special offerings, except when the Church appoints a committee of one or more for special offerings. He, or she, shall give a detailed account of all receipts and expenditures at the Annual Business Meeting of the Church. The Church Treasurer shall have authority to sign checks for approved expenditures on behalf of Milan Baptist Church.

MISSIONARY TREASURER:

The Missionary Treasurer shall receive and keep account of all missionary monies, and shall disburse the monies upon the order of the Board of Deacons. The recommendations concerning new missionaries and annual support shall be presented to the Church for approval. The Missionary Treasurer shall disburse approved budgeted monies. The Missionary Treasurer shall have authority to sign checks for approved expenditures on behalf of Milan Baptist Church.

ASSISTANT TREASURER

Will assist the other treasurers in all their duties. The Assistant Treasurer shall have authority to sign checks for approved expenditures on behalf of Milan Baptist Church.

SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT(S):

Realizing the importance, privilege, and responsibility of the teaching ministry of the Milan Baptist Church, the following expectations are for the Sunday School Superintendent(s):

QUALIFICATIONS

1. A believer who has shown spiritual maturity in the course of their life.
2. An active member of Milan Baptist Church who is in full agreement with its doctrinal statement.
3. A person who is biblically knowledgeable and who has an interest in the Christian education of the church.
4. A person who has evidenced leadership abilities and who works well with others.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Supervises, evaluates, supports, and assists the teachers and Sunday School Departmental Superintendents in carrying out the ministry of edification and appropriate evangelism in the Sunday School program.
2. Coordinates the ordering of supplies and materials, and recommends to the Board of Trustees all facility and equipment needs.
3. Works with the Board of Deacons in evaluating the effectiveness of current classes and the implementation of new classes.
4. Establishes a program for teacher training, when needed, and the ordering of materials to carry out the task.
5. Communicates to the teachers and department superintendents the goals, plans, and policies of the Sunday School.

SECTION 3 – THE FINANCIAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Financial Review Committee will consist of a minimum of (2) two members which cannot be current treasurers. The Review Committee shall examine all financial records of the church. The Board of Deacons shall appoint the committee 16 weeks before the Annual Business Meeting. The financial records shall be reviewed and the results reported at the Annual Business Meeting.

SECTION 4 - THE CHURCH NOMINATING COMMITTEE

1. Members

The Church Nominating Committee (known as “the Committee” throughout this section) consists of three Church Board members (at least one Deacon and one Trustee, plus a third member), three non-Board members (from the Church membership), and the Pastor (non-voting member). The Committee members are elected by the Church membership at the Annual Business Meeting. The Committee members serve a one year term and shall not serve more than two consecutive terms without at least a one year break. A Committee member must be a church member, in good standing, for at least one year.

2. Electing The Nominating Committee

At the Annual Business Meeting:

- a. After the new Church Board is established, the Board members are listed, excluding those that will be up for re-nomination the following year. The exclusions are to avoid any conflict of interest in having a member up for renewal and sitting on the committee that would decide if they should be considered for re-nomination.
- b. An exclusion list of the current Committee members that have served two consecutive terms must also be listed.
- c. There will be a call for nominations from the general membership of at least six names.
- d. The Committee members will then be chosen by ballot.

3. The Process

The process by which the Committee will prepare and present the nominations for the Annual Business Meeting is as follows:

- a. At least 16 weeks prior to the Annual Business Meeting, the Committee will be notified to convene by the Pastor. The Pastor will provide instructions to the Committee on this process, the qualifications of the positions, what positions will be open, and who is eligible for re-nomination. The congregation will be informed that the Committee has started the process.
- b. The congregation has 3 weeks to provide the Committee any recommendations of members to be considered for Board positions.
- c. The Committee will post their preliminary nomination list no less than 8 weeks prior to the Annual Business Meeting.
- d. The congregation has 2 weeks to provide the Committee, in writing, any feedback on those being nominated. The feedback will be prayerfully taken into consideration as the Committee prepares the final nomination list.
- e. The Committee will post a final nomination list no less than 3 weeks prior to the Annual Business Meeting. The Clerk will provide, and make available, absentee ballots.

In the event of an unexpected vacancy during the year, the Board of Deacons and Pastor will decide if the position is to be filled. If it is decided to fill the position, the same steps would be used as those listed above for the Annual Business Meeting. But the timeframes stated in steps “a” through “d” might vary at the discretion of the Board of Deacons and Pastor.

SECTION 5 – CHURCH BOARD

Membership of the Church Board shall consist of Deacons, Trustees, Church Treasurer, Missionary Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Sunday School Superintendent(s), Clerk, and Pastor(s).

The Church Board serves as a forum for ministry coordination within the body so that resources God has entrusted to the Church can be used most effectively for His purposes. The informational meetings are to be a time of idea and plan sharing between ministries. Any issues requiring decision as a result of a Church Board Meeting shall be resolved by the deacons through direct involvement or delegation.

The Church Board shall meet bimonthly or more frequently by special meeting as called by the deacons. Any ministry wishing to discuss coordination outside a normal bimonthly meeting may organize a meeting with the other pertinent ministries or may contact the deacons to schedule a special meeting of the full board.

ARTICLE 6 - MEETINGS

SECTION 1 - SERVICES

One of the central activities of the church is regular fellowship and worship. This is in accordance with Hebrews 10:25 in order to draw us closer to one another and to God. Therefore regular worship services and additional fellowship opportunities will take place and congregational participation will be encouraged.

SECTION 2 – THE LORD’S SUPPER

The Lord’s Supper shall be held the first Lord’s Day of each month unless otherwise specified.

SECTION 3 - CONGREGATIONAL BUSINESS MEETING

A meeting may be called by the pastor, deacons, or trustees. A meeting may also be called, upon a written application signed by twenty members of the Church, specifying the object of the meeting. Notice of the meeting shall be read from the pulpit of the Lord’s Day at least two weeks prior to the meeting. The quorum will consist of 40 percent of the members list as defined by the Board of Deacons.

SECTION 4 – ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING (see Amendment A)

The purpose of the meeting is to conduct church business and fulfill State of Michigan incorporation requirements. Agenda items are to elect officers, approve and/or amend the budget, and inform the congregation of the business of the church. The Annual Business Meeting will be held on the last Monday of January.

ARTICLE 7 - CALLING OF PASTORS

SECTION 1 – CALLING

In the event of death, resignation, or dismissal of the pastor, the deacons will be the Pulpit Committee to contact suitable pastoral candidates and arrange for them to minister at one or more occasions within the church. The church membership will vote upon the candidate recommended by the Pulpit Committee. A three-quarters majority of the ballots cast is required to extend a call. Prior to the vote, the Pulpit Committee will report to the members concerning the testimony, qualifications, experiences, etc., of the candidates. Once chosen, the pastor will remain until death or other severance of the pastoral relationship, and will not be voted upon on an annual or other periodical basis.

SECTION 2 – PASTOR’S SALARY

The pastor’s monetary and other supplemental compensation will be determined and approved by the Board of Deacons, and presented to the church for approval.

SECTION 3 - MEMBERSHIP

A pastor and wife shall be extended the privileges of membership upon their call.

ARTICLE 8 – DISCIPLINE OF PASTORS AND DEACONS

Discipline and dismissal of a pastor or deacon will follow the Scriptural pattern for discipline as laid out in Matthew 18:15-20. As is the case for all Christians, the purpose of this process is to restore the individual to fellowship and effective ministry. As will be seen, the two processes do differ from one another because the purpose of the pastor/deacon discipline process is to evaluate fitness to hold a position of leadership within the local body. Under this constitution, the pastoral staff and deacons are to hold one another accountable in the fulfillment of their ministries. This mutual accountability will encompass both the qualifications and the responsibilities as laid out in this constitution. Therefore, the primary responsibility for initiating discipline and dismissal of a pastor or deacon will lie with this group of leaders.

If the matter is not of a nature that would potentially disqualify the pastor or deacon from further ministry in an official capacity and if he repents and agrees to work toward resolution of the matter, it will be considered resolved. Please note that at any point in the process, regardless of the outcome, the leaders involved in resolving the matter with the pastor or deacon will also make every effort to work with him to ensure restoration and long-term spiritual growth in the area in question.

Steps:

1. If it is felt by an individual that a pastor or deacon has failed to fulfill the Biblical standards for pastoral ministry, that individual will meet privately with him. If the matter is of a nature that would potentially disqualify him from further ministry in an official capacity or if he is still unrepentant, the confronting individual will proceed to step 2.
2. The matter will be brought to the chairman of the Board of Deacons for prayerful consideration. If the leader in question is the chairman, the senior pastor will be approached. The chairman (or senior pastor as needed) will decide whether to involve another member of the board at this point. These men will then accompany the individual who brought the complaint and meet with the pastor or deacon in question. If the matter is of a nature that would potentially disqualify him from further ministry in an official capacity or if he is still unrepentant, these men will proceed to step 3.
3. The chairman of the Board of Deacons (or the senior pastor as needed) will present the matter to the entire Board of Deacons for prayerful consideration. The Board of Deacons will then meet with the pastor or deacon in question. If the Board of Deacons determines that the matter is of a nature that would definitely disqualify him from further ministry in an official capacity or if he is still unrepentant, the Board of Deacons will proceed to step 4.
4. The chairman of the Board of Deacons (or senior pastor as needed) will present the matter to the congregation for their prayerful consideration. The standard process for calling a congregational meeting will be followed. The Board of Deacons will review the case with the congregation. If the Board of Deacons had previously determined that the matter is of a nature that would definitely disqualify him from further ministry in an official capacity or if he is still unrepentant, the Board of Deacons will call for his dismissal from his position by the congregation. Seventy-five percent of the votes cast must be in favor of dismissal in order to remove a pastor or deacon.

ARTICLE 9- DISBURSEMENTS AND VOTING ON MONEY MATTERS

SECTION 1 – DISBURSEMENTS

The Pastor(s), Chairman of the Board of Trustees, or Chairman of the Board of Deacons are to initial each invoice with the exception of the utility bills, based on the respective budget, for payment or issue requisitions for checks. The treasurers are to be given a slip to identify each item and the budget line item from which it is to be drawn. All expenditures are to be limited to \$1,000 for any one project to be expensed from the deacon budget or \$2,000 from projects to be expensed from the trustee budget unless otherwise approved by the Board of Deacons.

SECTION 2 - VOTING ON MONEY MATTERS

The Chairman of the Deacons shall approve all money matters up to \$1,000 allowed for any one project. The exception is that the chairman of the trustees may approve money matters up to \$2,000 pertaining to their responsibilities. The Board of Deacons are to authorize any funds above these amounts and up to \$10,000. Any proposed expenditure above \$10,000 and not previously approved as part of the annual budget must be presented to the church membership for approval by simple majority of ballots cast.

ARTICLE 10- HONORARY POSITIONS

Any and all honorary positions bestowed on individuals by the church after inception of current constitution shall be of a non-voting position. Any honorary position can not hold a chairmanship of any board. Any honorary position will be above and beyond the total number of normal elected positions of any board.

ARTICLE 11 – DISSOLVING CORPORATION

Prior to any decision to dissolve this corporation known as Milan Baptist Church, the congregation will submit to a Christian arbitration organization in order to make every attempt to resolve the internal conflicts. In the event the conflicts cannot be resolved and a decision is made to proceed with dissolution, provision shall be made by vote of the church previous to the dissolution of the corporation, to assign all of the assets to one or more fundamental, Bible believing, non-profit organizations, such as churches, missions, schools, or associations. None of the assets shall be given to any individual.

ARTICLE 12 – AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION

1. The proposed amendment is brought to the Board of Deacons for consideration. This proposed amendment can be brought by any regularly attending church member in good standing or by a review committee established by the Board of Deacons. After appropriate prayer and discussion, which may require more than one meeting in order to properly examine the proposed amendment, the Board of Deacons will make the decision. If approved, the proposed amendment will be presented to the church congregation for a vote.
2. The church secretary will prepare an insert to be placed in the bulletin for the next two weeks. The bulletin will also include the information that absentee ballots can be obtained from the Clerk.
3. The chairman of the Board of Deacons (or designated alternate) will read the proposed amendment to the congregation at (2) two Sunday morning services.
4. The church secretary will prepare the proposed amendment as both a ballot and an absentee ballot. It will be reviewed by the Board of Deacons prior to use.
5. A special church meeting will be called.
6. The meeting will be conducted per the normal procedures for church special meetings.
7. If the proposed amendment is approved by 75 percent of the members present for voting (plus absentee ballots returned prior to the meeting), the proposed amendment is incorporated as part of the Constitution. It will be added to Article 13 and will be recorded on the Constitutional Amendment Record Sheet attached to the Constitution.
8. If the proposed amendment fails to win approval, it can be resubmitted for consideration per the normal procedure after a minimum of three months have passed.

ARTICLE 13 – AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

All amendments will be attached as part of this article and will be recorded on the Constitutional Amendment History Record Sheet by the Clerk.

1. The Record Sheet will be formatted as follows:
 - a. Amendment letter
 - b. Date of amendment
 - c. Section amended
 - d. Constitution Revision Level at the time of amendment
 - e. Date of inclusion in the body of the Constitution (see number 2)

2. In the event that the Constitution is revised so that the recorded amendments are incorporated, this will be noted on the Record Sheet by placing the date of incorporation in the appropriate column.

3. A revision will be performed periodically as requested by the Board of Deacons. A “revision” is defined as the incorporation of the previously approved amendments into the body of the Constitution and the correction of any spelling or grammatical errors. The Clerk will perform the task. The revised Constitution will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Deacons.

4. If it is determined that an extensive review of a major issue or issues within the Constitution should be performed, a Constitutional Review Committee will be appointed. The results will be reported back and voted on (if amendments are proposed) by following the regular amendment procedure. The committee will consist of the following regularly attending church members in good standing who will be appointed by the Board of Deacons:
 - a. The pastor(s)
 - b. All of the deacons
 - c. One or more trustees
 - d. Church Clerk
 - e. Additional church members

5. The Constitution Document must include the following to be considered valid:
 - a. Page numbers (including total number of pages; i.e. “1 of 12”)
 - b. Revision date
 - c. Revision level

AMENDMENT A

ARTICLE 6 - MEETINGS

SECTION 4 – ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

The purpose of the meeting is to conduct church business and fulfill State of Michigan incorporation requirements. Agenda items are to elect officers, approve and/or amend the budget, and inform the congregation of the business of the church. The Annual Business Meeting will be held on the first Monday of June, or as specified by the Deacons if circumstances dictate a variance.

AMENDMENT HISTORY RECORD SHEET

Letter or Number	Brief Explanation of Amendment	Date of Amendment	Section Amended	Constitution Revision Level	Date of Inclusion
	Revised Constitution	10/28/03	All of Document	1	10/28/03
A	Change of annual business meeting date.	01/10/10	Article 6 – Meetings Section 4 – Annual Business Meeting	2	01/25/10