

# CONSTITUTION *of the* NOBLESVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH

*Revised by the Membership on:  
March 19, 2021, April 23, 2021, May 21, 2021, September 26, 2021, November 21, 2021.*

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## **PREAMBLE**

Since it pleased Almighty God, by His Holy Spirit, to call certain of His servants to unite here in 1973 under the name Noblesville Baptist Temple, for the worship of God and the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and He has sustained and prospered this work to the present day; and whereas we, the members of Noblesville Baptist Church, having searched the Scriptures under the guidance of His Spirit, have recognized the need to reconstitute ourselves to more closely conform to His will for the Church in this age and prepare ourselves for greater efforts in His name;

Now therefore we, the members of Noblesville Baptist Church, do hereby organize ourselves as such and adopt this Constitution as our articles of governance, to be interpreted at all times to reflect the character of and bring glory to Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Holy Bible and articulated in the standards set forth in the Statement of Faith and Covenant of this church.

## **ARTICLE 1 – NAME & PURPOSE**

### **Section 1 – Name**

This organization shall be referred to as the Noblesville Baptist Church of Noblesville, Indiana.

### **Section 2 – Purpose**

This church exists by the grace of God, in the power of God, for the glory of God, which shall be the ultimate purpose in all its activities. This church glorifies God by loving Him and obeying His commands through:

- Worshipping Him consistently in spirit and truth;
- Equipping His saints through Bible instruction and study;
- Proclaiming the gospel of His Christ through preaching and personal evangelism, and any other means consistent with the teachings of His Holy Scripture;
- Encouraging, supporting, and participating in making disciples of His Son, both locally and internationally;
- Administering His ordinances of baptism and communion;
- Encouraging Biblical fellowship among believers; and
- Serving other individuals, families, and churches by providing for physical, emotional, and spiritual needs, in the name of His Son, Jesus Christ;

## ARTICLE 2 – MEMBERSHIP

### **Section 1 – Qualifications**

To qualify for membership in this church, a person must be a believer in Jesus Christ who gives evidence of regeneration, who has been baptized, in obedience to Christ, following his or her regeneration, and who wholeheartedly believes in the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible. Each member must agree to submit to the teaching of scripture as expressed in the Statement of Faith and must promise to keep the commitments expressed in the Church Covenant. The elders shall be responsible for determining each person's qualification for membership. In making this determination, they may rely on a person's profession of faith, or such other evidence, as the elders deem appropriate.

### **Section 2 – Admission**

To be admitted into church membership, applicants shall be ordinarily, but not necessarily, recommended by the elders for admission and must be accepted by vote of the members at any regular or special meeting of the members, and shall at that point relinquish their membership in other churches.

### **Section 3 – Duties & Privileges**

In accord with the duties enumerated in the Church Covenant, each member shall be privileged and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of the church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Only those shall be entitled to serve in the ministries of the church who are members of this congregation; non-members may serve on an ad-hoc basis with the approval of the elders. Notwithstanding, non-members may serve the church for purposes of administration and professional consultation. Under Christ this congregation is governed by its members. Therefore, it is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend members' meetings and vote on the election of officers, on decisions regarding membership status, and on such other matters as may be submitted to a vote.

### **Section 4 – Discipline**

Any member consistently neglectful of his or her duties or guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the church and/or rendering doubtful a profession of faith, shall be subject to the admonition of the elders and the discipline of the church, according to the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17 and the example of scripture. Church discipline, then, should ordinarily be contemplated after individual private admonition has failed. Church discipline can include admonition by the elders or congregation, deposition from office, and excommunication (*see Matthew 18:15–17; 1 Timothy 5:19-20; 1 Corinthians 5:4–5*).

- The purpose of such discipline should be for the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined  
(*Proverbs 15:5; 29:15; 1 Corinthians 4:14; Ephesians 6:4; 1 Timothy 3:4–5; Hebrews 12:1–11; Psalm 119:115; 141:5; Proverbs 17:10; 25:12; 27:5; Ecclesiastes 7:5; Matthew 7:26–27; 18:15–17; Luke 17:3; Acts 2:40; 1 Corinthians 5:5; Galatians 6:1–5; II Thessalonians 3:6, 14–15; 1 Timothy 1:20; Titus 1:13–14; James 1:22*);
- For the instruction in righteousness and good of other Christians, as an example to them  
(*Proverbs 13:20; Romans 15:14; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 15:33; Colossians 3:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:14 [note this is written to the whole church, not just to leaders]; 1 Timothy 5:20; Titus 1:11; Hebrews 10:24-25*);
- For the purity of the church as a whole

*(I Corinthians 5:6–7; II Corinthians 13:10; Ephesians 5:27; II John 10; Jude 24; Revelation 21:2);*

- For the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians  
*(Proverbs 28:7; Matthew 5:13–16; John 13:35; Acts 5:1–14; Ephesians 5:11; I Timothy 3:7; II Peter 2:2; I John 3:10);* and
- Supremely for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character  
*(Deuteronomy 5:11; I Kings 11:2; II Chronicles 19:2; Ezra 6:21; Nehemiah 9:2; Isaiah 52:11; Ezekiel 36:20; Matthew 5:16; John 15:8; 18:17, 25; Romans 2:24; 15:5–6; II Corinthians 6:14–7:1; Ephesians 1:4; 5:27; I Peter 2:12).*

## **Section 5 – Termination**

The church shall recognize the termination of a person's membership following his or her death, and it shall also recognize the termination of a person's membership following his or her self-professed apostasy as confirmed by congregational vote. Additionally, the church may recognize the termination of a person's membership after he or she has voluntarily resigned or joined with another church. Membership may also be terminated as an act of church discipline (ordinarily, but not necessarily, at the recommendation of the elders) upon the vote of at least two-thirds of the members present at any regular or special meeting of the members. The church shall have authority to refuse a member's voluntary resignation or transfer of membership to another church, either for the purpose of proceeding with a process of church discipline, or for any other biblical reason.

## **ARTICLE 3 – OFFICERS**

### **Section 1 – Summary**

The Biblical offices in the church are elders and deacons. In addition, our church recognizes the administrative positions under this constitution of clerk and treasurer. All officers must be members of this church prior to assuming their responsibilities.

### **Section 2 – Elders**

The elders shall be comprised of not less than three men who satisfy the qualifications for the office of elder set forth in I Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:6–9. No elder shall hold the office of deacon during his tenure. Subject to the will of the congregation, the elders shall oversee the ministry and resources of the church. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1–6 and I Peter 5:1–4, the elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God's flock. The church shall recognize men gifted and willing to serve in this calling, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections. These men shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as elders. This recognition shall be reaffirmed by the church triennially. After an elder, other than the senior or associate pastor(s), has served two consecutive three-year terms, he may only be elected to the office of elder after at least one year.

An elder's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. Any two members with reason to believe that an elder should be dismissed should express such concern to the elders and, if need be, to the congregation. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17 and I Timothy 5:17–21. Any of the elders may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the members at any members' meeting of the church.

The elders shall take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members, examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions, oversee the work of the deacons and appointed

church agents and committees, conduct worship services, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, equip the membership for the work of the ministry, encourage sound doctrine and practice, admonish and correct error, oversee the process of church discipline, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church, and mobilize the church for world missions. Further, the elders should seek to ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, affirm our fundamental gospel convictions and do not teach our church anything contrary to the Statement of Faith.

The elders may establish ministry positions or committees to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. The elders may also propose funding for new paid staff positions. The membership shall approve all candidates to fill the positions of senior and associate pastor. The scope and approval of job descriptions for any staff position shall reside in the hands of those with hiring authority for that position. Each year the elders, after consultation with the deacons, and the membership, shall present to the church an itemized budget. This budget shall be presented for discussion at a regular or specially called budget meeting and called up for a vote at the following members' meeting. No money shall be solicited by or on behalf of the church or any of its ministries without the approval of the elders.

The elders shall elect a chairman of elders' meetings and shall also elect one of their number to serve as moderator of members' meetings. For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the state of Indiana, the elders shall elect one of their number to serve as the president of the corporation.

### **Section 3 – Senior Pastor**

The senior pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder described in Section 2, above, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching. His call shall not be subject to the triennial reaffirmation or to the term limitation set out in Article 3, Section 2, for elders. His call shall be defined as per Article 4, Section 3.

He shall oversee and engage in preaching on the Lord's Day, in administering the ordinances of baptism and communion, and in performing such other duties as usually pertain to that office, or as set forth in the constitution. The senior pastor shall have primary responsibility for the supervision and evaluation of staff members. This responsibility may, on a case-by-case basis, be delegated to another staff member. In the absence or incapacity of the senior pastor the elders shall assume responsibility for his duties, any of which can be delegated.

### **Section 4 – Associate Pastors**

The church may call additional pastors whose relationship to the senior pastor is that of associate. An associate pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder described in Section 2, above, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching. His call shall not be subject to the triennial reaffirmation or to the term limitation set out in Article 3, Section 2, for elders. His call shall be defined as per Article 4, Section 4.

He shall assist the senior pastor in the performance of his regular duties and shall perform any other duties as usually pertain to the office of pastor, or as set forth in the constitution, or which may be specifically assigned to him by the congregation. In the absence or incapacity of the senior pastor for defined periods of time (such as sabbatical or illness), the associate pastor(s) shall assume the responsibility for his duties under the oversight of the elders.

### **Section 5 – Deacons**

The office of deacon is described in I Timothy 3:8–13. The church shall recognize, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections, men who are giving of themselves in service to the church, and who possess particular gifts of service. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1–6, these members shall be

received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as deacons. They shall be elected to one term lasting for a maximum of three years and may only be elected to another term after one year. Deacons shall care for the temporal needs of members, attend to the accommodations for public worship, and encourage and support those able to help others and those with gifts of administration.

The elders, with assistance from the deacons shall receive, hold, and disburse a fund for benevolence, reporting on its use to the elders at their request, and reporting to the church its total receipts and total disbursements only. The deacons, with the agreement of the elders, may establish unpaid administrative positions or committees of members to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities in the church.

### **Section 6 – Clerk**

It shall be the duty of the clerk to record the minutes of all regular and special members' meetings of the church, to preserve an accurate roll of the membership, and to render reports as requested by the elders or the church. The clerk, who shall be a member in good standing, shall be nominated by the elders and elected by the congregation to serve a term of three years. In the absence or incapacity of the clerk, the elders shall appoint a member to perform the duties of the church clerk. For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the state of Indiana, the clerk shall serve as the secretary of the corporation. The church clerk shall ensure that dated copies of the most recent revision of this constitution shall be available for all church members.

### **Section 7 – Treasurer**

The treasurer, who shall not be an active elder, deacon, or paid church staff member, shall be a member in good standing. The treasurer shall support the elders in providing oversight of the financial and accounting activities of the church, shall not have custody of church funds, and shall ensure that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as appropriate. The treasurer shall also be responsible for presenting regular reports of the account balances, revenues and expenses of the church at each members' meeting. This responsibility may be delegated with the approval of the elders.

The treasurer shall also see that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept in books belonging to the church, and that adequate controls are implemented to ensure that all funds belonging to the church are appropriately handled by any officer, employee, or agent of the church. The treasurer shall render to the elders, whenever they may require it, an account of all activities as treasurer and of the financial condition of the church. The treasurer shall be nominated by the elders and elected by the congregation to serve a term of three years.

## **ARTICLE 4 – ELECTIONS**

### **Section 1 – Principles**

The process for church elections shall be interpreted and carried out to fulfill the following principles: Substantial prayer, both individually and corporately, should be an integral part of the election process; Nominations should proceed with the support of the elders; All candidates for church office should be treated with the grace, kindness, and honesty appropriate in evaluating fellow members; The election process shall express that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration that is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Section 2 – Selection of Officers**

The election of officers shall be held at a members' meeting of the church. Names of nominees to serve as elders, deacons, clerk, or treasurer shall be presented by the elders at the previous members' meeting (providing

that previous meeting occurred at least eight weeks prior), and the election shall proceed as directed by the moderator.

The elders should seek recommendations and involvement from the general membership in the nomination process. Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified for an office should express such concern to the elders. Members intending to speak in opposition to a candidate should express their objection to the elders as far in advance as possible before the relevant church members' meeting. The moderator shall declare elected all men receiving a three-fourths majority of all votes cast for the office of elder at a regularly scheduled members meeting. For all other offices, the moderator shall declare elected all persons receiving a simple majority of all votes cast; abstentions will not be considered as votes cast. The persons elected shall assume their respective offices upon election, unless another date has been specifically designated.

### **Section 3 – Calling of the Senior Pastor**

In the calling of any man to this position, the same basic process of calling an elder must be followed. In addition, however, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential senior pastor and, before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance from the elders that, having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Statement of Faith and Church Covenant. Notice of the nomination of a man to be elected to membership and called as senior pastor (which shall include, if necessary, election to membership of his wife if he is married) must be given at two Sunday morning services following the nomination, prior to the vote at a members' meeting.

### **Section 4 – Calling of Associate Pastors**

In the calling of any man to the position of associate pastor, the same basic process of calling an elder must be followed. In addition, however, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential associate pastor and, before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance from the elders that, having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Statement of Faith and Church Covenant. Notice of the nomination of a man to be called as associate pastor (which shall include, if necessary, election to membership of him and his wife if he is married) must be given at two Sunday morning services following the nomination, prior to the vote at a members' meeting.

## **ARTICLE 5 – MEETINGS**

### **Section 1 – Worship Meetings**

Worship assemblies shall be held each Lord's Day and may be held throughout the week as the church determines.

### **Section 2 – Members' Meetings**

In every meeting together, members shall act in that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration which is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ. There shall be a regular members' meeting at least annually, at some time apart from a public worship assembly agreed upon by the membership. An elder designated by the elders shall preside as moderator at all members' meetings of the church. The elders shall see that the stated meetings of the church are regularly held and that required reports are submitted to the church by the responsible members.

Provided all constitutional provisions for notification have been met, a quorum shall be understood to be met by those members present. All votes shall be tallied based on the number of votes cast by members present. A budget shall be approved by the membership at a members' meeting not more than three months after the start of the fiscal year. Congregational approval shall proceed, without amendment, as a single vote on the budget in

its entirety. Prior to this approval and subject to the elders' discretion, expenditures may continue at the prior year's level.

At any regular or special members' meeting, officers may be elected, and positions filled as needed, so long as all relevant constitutional requirements have been met. Special members' meetings may be called as required by the elders, or at the written request, submitted to the elders, of ten percent of the voting membership. The date, time, and purpose of any special meeting shall be announced at all public assemblies of the church within two weeks preceding the meeting. In the event of a written request from the members, the elders shall call a special meeting to be held within one month of their receipt of the request.

## **ARTICLE 6 – AMENDMENTS**

The Statement of Faith and Church Covenant may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a members' meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing at the previous members' meeting, and shall have been announced from the pulpit at church assemblies two successive Sundays prior to such vote. This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a members' meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing at the previous members' meeting, and shall have been announced from the pulpit at church assemblies two successive Sundays prior to such vote. The revised version of this constitution shall be made available to all church members by the church clerk.

## **ARTICLE 7 – INDEMNIFICATION**

### **Section 1 – Mandatory Indemnification**

If a legal claim or criminal allegation is made against a person because he or she is or was an officer, employee, or agent of the church, the church shall provide indemnification against liability and costs incurred in defending against the claim if the elders determine that the person acted (a) in good faith, (b) with the care an ordinarily prudent person in a similar position would exercise under similar circumstances, and (c) in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in the best interest of the church, and the person had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful.

### **Section 2 – Permissive Indemnification**

At the discretion of the elders, the church also may indemnify any person who acted in good faith and reasonably believed that his or her conduct was in the church's best interest and not unlawful.

### **Section 3 – Procedure**

If a quorum of the elders is not available for an indemnification determination because of the number of elders seeking indemnification, the requisite determination may be made by the membership or by special legal counsel appointed by the membership.

## **ARTICLE 8 – DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

Believing that the Bible commands Christians to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian Church (see, e.g., Matthew 18: 15–20, I Corinthians 6: 1–8), the church shall require its members to resolve ordinary civil disputes among themselves according to biblically based principles, without reliance on the secular courts. In the case of criminal activity within the congregation, the State has a God-given responsibility to protect the peace and security of its citizens that should be supported

and encouraged. Consistent with its call to peacemaking, the church shall encourage the use of biblically based principles to resolve disputes between itself and those outside the church, whether Christian or pagan and whether individuals or corporate entities.

### **ARTICLE 9 – DEVIATIONS OF PRACTICE**

If a church member believes the church to be out of accord with this constitution, he or she should inform an elder. When the elders determine that the church is out of accord with this constitution, they must provide an update at each members' meeting until the situation is remedied.

### **ARTICLE 10 – DISSOLUTION**

In the event that the elders of the church determine that there is reasonable cause to dissolve the Noblesville Baptist Church as a corporate entity, the elders shall recommend dissolution to the membership. The elders shall call a special members' meeting. Notice of the meeting shall be sent in writing to the membership and posted at all entrances to the church building no less than sixty days prior to the meeting. The notice shall state that the purpose of the meeting is to consider dissolution of the corporation and how the assets of the corporation will be distributed after all creditors have been paid. At least two-thirds of the members present at the meeting must vote in the affirmative to approve the proposal of dissolution.

After approval of dissolution by the members, all of the corporation's debts shall be fully satisfied. None of its assets or holdings shall be divided among the members or other individuals, but shall be irrevocably designated, as approved by a simple majority of the members present at a members' meeting, to one or more religious organizations which meet the qualifications described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and which are in agreement with the letter and spirit of the Statement of Faith. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of exclusively for such exempt purposes by a court of competent jurisdiction where the principal office of the corporation is then located.