

# CONSTITUTION OF PARKSIDE CHURCH

*(As Last Amended at the Congregational Meeting of (MM/DD/YYYY))*

**PREAMBLE:** We, the members of PARKSIDE CHURCH, do ordain and establish the following Constitution to which we voluntarily submit.

## ARTICLE I

**NAME:** The name of the church shall be “PARKSIDE CHURCH”. The word “church” as used in this Constitution shall refer to Parkside Church, whereas the word “Church” shall refer to the Body and Bride of Christ.

## ARTICLE II

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this church is to see unbelieving people become committed followers of Jesus Christ. It shall seek to attain this end through evangelizing unbelievers, encouraging believers in their personal faith, fellowship and service. Our focus will always be to exalt His name and His Word. (Matthew 28:18-20 & Psalm 138:2)

**AUTHORITY:** The Board of Elders is the governing body of this church.

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

## ARTICLE III

**MEMBERSHIP:** Any person may become a member upon professing saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and upon satisfactorily meeting the requirements set by the Elders.

A person whose permanent residence is outside a 100-mile radius of the main Parkside Church facility shall not be classed as a member.

A. Responsibilities of membership: The responsibilities of church membership are summarized in the church Covenant as follows:

Having been led, as we believe by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, we do now in the presence of God and this church most solemnly and joyfully enter into this Covenant with one another as one body in Christ. We engage therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit:

1. To exhibit the fruit of the spirit in all our activities and relationships; (Galatians 5:19-26)
2. To endeavor by all that we do, say or think to be devoted to prayer, watchfulness, thankfulness, wisdom and grace so that “you may know how to answer everyone”; (1Peter 3:15,16), Colossians 3:17,23,24)
3. To walk together in Christian love, purity and unity so that the outside world will know we are committed followers of Jesus Christ; (John 13:34-35, Colossians 3)
4. To submit to and pray for the leadership; (Hebrews 13:17-18)
5. To serve the family of believers with God’s gifting; (I Peter 4:10-11)
6. To contribute, as the Lord directs, to the financial support of the Church, the relief of the needy and evangelism of all people. (I Corinthians 16:1-4, II Corinthians 9)
7. To seek God’s kingdom first through regular Bible reading , prayer, regular public worship, fellowship and service.( Matthew 6:33)
8. To strive by example, by prayer, with friends and neighbors and work associates to a personal faith in Jesus Christ. (Colossians 4:2-6)

B. Discipline of Members: The purpose of church discipline is to affect a return to a Biblical standard of conduct and doctrine in a member who errs (Galatians 6:1) to maintain purity in the local church (I Corinthians 5:6) and to deter sin (I Timothy 5:20).

Any member of this church who teaches or insists on holding false doctrine, or persistently conducts himself or herself in a manner inconsistent with Biblical teaching, or who persists in disturbing the unity or peace of the church shall be dealt with as follows, according to Matthew 18:15-18:

1. It is the duty of any member of this church who has knowledge of an erring member’s heresy or misconduct to warn and correct the erring member in private, seeking his or her repentance and restoration.
2. If the erring member does not heed this warning, the warning

- member shall again go to the erring member accompanied by one or two other members as witnesses to warn and correct, seeking repentance and restoration.
3. If the erring member still refuses to heed the warning, the matter shall be brought to the attention of the Elders, who, upon careful and prayerful investigation, shall tell it to the church encouraging the congregation to pray for repentance and restoration of the erring member.
  4. If the erring member refuses to heed the warnings of the Elders and the church, he or she shall be dismissed from the church pursuant to the Scriptures and treated as an unbeliever. There shall be no appeal of the discipline process or the dismissal to any court. The congregation shall be encouraged to pray for the repentance and restoration of the erring member.

It is clearly understood that the discipline process will continue to conclusion even if the erring member leaves the church or otherwise seeks to withdraw from membership.

- C. Termination of Membership: Membership may be terminated in one of four ways:
1. By physical death;
  2. By transfer: When it is requested, the Elders may grant to a departing member in good standing, a letter of dismissal to the fellowship of another church. No letter may be given to a member who is at the time under the corrective discipline of the church. The Elders may refuse to grant a letter of transfer to any church, which is in their judgment disloyal to the gospel. (Jude 3)
  3. By exclusion: If a member habitually absents himself from the stated meetings of the church without valid reason, or if due to relocation he ceases to maintain a vital contact with the church, he may be excluded from membership. If an excluded member applies again for membership, the procedures set forth will again be followed.
  4. By dismissal as a final step of church discipline. The Board of Elders shall only apply the above-mentioned dismissal (see Article III, section B4) in strict accordance with the Scriptures.

#### **ARTICLE IV**

**DOCTRINE:** We accept the Scriptures as our authority in matters of faith and

practice and adopt the following Confession of Faith as our interpretation of Bible Doctrine:

- A. We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as being verbally inspired by God and inerrant and infallible in the original writings, and that they are of supreme and final authority.
- B. We believe in one God eternally existing in one essence, yet three co-equal persons, the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- C. We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten by God, conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born to the virgin Mary.
- D. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, Who convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. He is the life of the believer, and He empowers the preaching of the gospel.
- E. We believe that mankind was created in the image of God, sinned, and thereby incurred not only physical death, but spiritual death, which is separation from God, and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature.
- F. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice, and that all who believe in Him are justified on the basis of His shed blood.
- G. We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, His ascension into heaven, and His present life there as High Priest and Advocate for us.
- H. We believe in the blessed hope, which is the personal, visible, and imminent return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.
- I. We believe that all who receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ are born again by the Holy Spirit, and thereby become children of God and heirs of eternal life.
- J. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost in hell, and the fellowship of the saved in heaven.
- K. We believe in the existence of a personal devil, who is still working in the world to destroy the souls of men, and that he and all his angels and all who do not receive Christ as their Savior will eternally perish in the lake of fire.
- L. We believe in the Church, whose mission it is to preach the Scriptures to all the world, all of its endeavors being guided by multiple leadership and supported by the wise stewardship of God's people.
- M. We believe that the ordinances of the Church, given by our Lord, are Baptism and the Lord's Table (Communion).
- N. We believe that the foregoing are Biblical doctrines, therefore, we stand firm upon this Confession of Faith.

*(A further explanation of the doctrine is contained in Appendix A.)*

promise: (1) to repay the amount advanced it if proved by clear and convincing evidence in court that the officers', directors', Elders', Ministers', Pastors' or and business administrators' conduct involved a deliberate intent to injure the church's best interest, (2) to reasonably cooperate with the church in connection with the action, suit or proceeding.

This indemnification shall be available to any officer, director, Elder, Minister, Pastor, and/or business administrator which is made or thereafter to be made a part to any action, suit or proceeding because of the person's position within the church. Persons who are officers, directors, Elders, Ministers, Pastors and/or business administrators at the time of being made a party, or threatened with being made a party to any action, suit or proceeding, or were officers, directors, Elders, Ministers, Pastors and/or business administrators at the time of the event (s) complained of in any such action, suit or proceeding, shall be allowed indemnification. Indemnification will also be available in criminal actions only if it is found that the officer, director, Elder, Minister, Pastor or business administrator had no reasonable cause to believe that the subject acts were unlawful.

#### ARTICLE XVII

**EFFECTUAL POWER OF THE CONSTITUTION:** This Constitution shall remain in force as presently formulated or as duly amended according to Article XIII until this corporation is duly dissolved. This Constitution shall not be suspended or abrogated.

#### ARTICLE XVIII

**CONFIDENTIALITY OF CHURCH RECORDS:** No member shall have the right to inspect the church records as to; (i) the disciplining of any members, (ii) the hiring or firing of any employee, (iii) the need or problems of any member or employee, (iv) the financial contributions of any member, or (v) any other records which the Board of Elders may determine to be kept confidential in the best interests of the church except that only as to item (v) of this Article XVIII, the congregation in any special business meeting shall have the right by a majority of those members voting, to inspect any of such other records.

#### ARTICLE V

**QUALIFICATIONS OF CHURCH LEADERS:** All persons who hold any position of leadership (including but not limited to teachers, committee members, church staff and church workers) must meet and maintain the following spiritual qualifications for leadership:

- A. Has accepted Jesus Christ as personal Savior.
- B. Is a member of Parkside Church.
- C. Teaches no doctrine contrary to the "Confession of Faith" as put forth in the Constitution of Parkside Church.
- D. Provides systematic spiritual, financial and physical support to Parkside Church ministry.
- E. Is known for a dedicated Christian life according to the standards of God's Word and will purpose to put any sin, including doubtful conduct and conversation, out of his/her life so that the resulting influence is helpful rather than a hindrance.
- F. Fulfills such specific biblical requirements as may apply to the position of responsibility.

#### ARTICLE VI

**ELDERS:** God has established the office of Elder to provide leadership for His Church. At Parkside Church the role of Elder is filled by some, members of the Pastoral staff and lay Elders. Those who serve and minister in these roles shall collectively and individually oversee, provide for and encourage the spiritual life, welfare and total ministry of the congregation in order to insure the proper equipping of the saints.

As God's servants and stewards, these leaders shall be persons:

- A. Who meet the qualifications as given in Scripture; (I Timothy 3:1-15; 5:19-25; II Timothy 2:24-25; Titus 1:5-9; Acts 6:3-6)
- B. Who adhere to the doctrinal basis of this church;
- C. Whose soundness in the faith and whose ability to serve has been examined and approved by the church.

Therefore, our church leaders are to be assisted, obeyed and respected as they carry out their duties (Hebrews 13:17).

- D. Duties of Senior Pastor: As an Elder of this church the Senior Pastor shall:
  1. Give himself to prayer and the study of the Word of God;

2. Preach and expound the Word of God;
3. Administer the Ordinances in accordance with the Word of God;
4. Share in the pastoral care of the congregation along with the other Elders and members of the pastoral staff;
5. Perform the marriage ceremony at his discretion in accordance with the laws of God and the State;
6. Officiate at funerals of members of the church and non-members at his discretion;
7. Together with the other Elders maintain church discipline;
8. Participate in the installation of newly designated Elders;
9. Act as an ex-officio member of all committees and boards;
10. Perform other constitutional, Scriptural and general pastoral duties.

Under oversight of the Board of Elders, the Senior Pastor shall be free to accept invitations to preach the Word of God to other groups or organizations, provided such engagements do not interfere with the work of the church.

E. Duties of Elders:

1. To be devoted to prayer and the study of God's Word and sustain a caring ministry for the flock, which involves:
  - a. Serving as partners with the Pastors for the church's spiritual growth;
  - b. Praying for the sick and visiting the congregation.
2. To teach and exhort as well as refute those who contradict the truth, which involves:
  - a. Insuring that instructors, Bible study leaders and youth leaders are properly qualified;
  - b. Arranging for pulpit supply during the Senior Pastor's absence.
3. To lead by Christ-like example, which involves:
  - a. Consistently modeling spiritual character, attitudes, values and behavior among the members;
  - b. Providing and inviting the opportunity for frequent and on-going contact with members;
  - c. Conducting the affairs of the church in an atmosphere of openness and mutual sensitivity, focusing as much on nurturing the members as on decision-making.
4. To oversee the affairs of the church, which involves:
  - a. Being responsible for the employment, terms of employment, direction and termination of employment of pastoral staff;
  - b. Installing the duly elected Pastor and/or Pastors;

Fifty percent of the Board members must be present to constitute a quorum at any board meeting.

A quorum shall be necessary for any vote.

### ARTICLE XIII

**AMENDMENTS:** The Constitution or Articles of Incorporation of this church may be amended at any meeting by a two-thirds majority of the members voting, provided that both the text of such amendment and the basis for its consideration have been mailed to all members at least thirty days in advance of any meeting at which such a proposal will be considered or voted upon, except that no mailing shall be required to those members who have picked up their written notices at Parkside at least thirty days in advance of the meeting.

### ARTICLE XIV

**RAISING FUNDS:** It shall not be the policy of this church to promote suppers or parties or to engage in the sale of products and/or services for the purpose of raising funds. Any exception to this general policy must have the prior approval of the Board of Elders.

### ARTICLE XV

**CHURCH UNITY:** When Parkside Church members disagree on their interpretations, we pray that the love of Christ guard our attitudes toward one another so that we exhibit a genuine concern for the building up of all God's people in an atmosphere of love.

### ARTICLE XVI

**INDEMNIFICATION:** Parkside Church will indemnify and hold harmless any and all officers, directors, Elders, Ministers, Pastors and/or business administrators for any expenses actually and necessarily incurred in connection with any action, suit or proceeding against said officers, directors, Elders, Ministers, Pastors and/or business administrators. This indemnification shall include costs for attorney fees. This indemnification shall occur as the expenses are incurred and in advance of the final disposition of the action, suit or proceeding, on receipt of the officers', directors', Elders', Ministers', Pastors' or business administrators'

obligations of the church shall be paid. Secondly, all remaining funds shall be directed to such one or more Christian organizations qualified under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, for the benefit of the church's supported missionaries and/or such other Christian endeavors as the congregation shall determine. The church shall be considered dissolved if so decided by the Board of Elders or when less than six members remain.

- D. Any sale or other disposition of the main Parkside Church facility at 7100 Pettibone Road, Bainbridge, Ohio, shall be approved majority vote of voting members of the congregation. All other real estate transactions shall be approved by majority vote of the Board of Elders.

## ARTICLE X

**MEETINGS:** Meetings may be called:

- A. By the Board of Elders;

As meetings are needed a notice of a meeting shall be mailed to each church member at least ten business days in advance of the meeting, except that no mailing shall be required to those members who shall have picked up their written notices at Parkside at least ten business days in advance of the meeting. This notice shall include the agenda of the meeting to be conducted or considered at said meeting. In the event that a condition or situation arises which the Board of Elders deems an emergency, the advance notice regulation may be waived.

## ARTICLE XI

**SUFFRAGE:** Only members of this church who are at least eighteen years of age and whose permanent residence is within a 100-mile radius of the main Parkside Church facility shall have the right to vote in person or by absentee ballot at any meeting of the church.

## ARTICLE XII

**QUORUMS:** The presence in person or by absentee ballot of thirty percent of Parkside Church membership eligible to vote shall constitute a quorum at any meeting except for constitutional amendments, which shall require a quorum of forty percent. The secretary of the Board of Elders shall be responsible for determining the number, which accurately represents the total voting membership of the church. For purposes of determining a quorum, those members who are present and those who are absent but have submitted absentee ballots shall be counted.

- c. Approving all subordinate organizations of the church;
  - d. Approving all applicants for church membership;
  - e. Maintaining the legal status of the church;
  - f. Being responsible for securing funds necessary to meet the current expenses of the church;
  - g. Conducting the meetings of the church;
  - h. Approving nominations for the Board of Elders;
  - i. Communication to the congregation on a regular basis concerning the activities and concerns of the Elders.
5. To perform other constitutional, Scriptural and general duties of oversight.

- F. Duties of Pastoral Staff: To perform such duties as are outlined by the Senior Pastor and the Board of Elders.

## ARTICLE VII

### NOMINATION AND SELECTION OF SENIOR PASTOR AND ELDERS:

- A. The Senior Pastor: When the senior pastorate of this church becomes vacant, it shall be the duty of the Board of Elders after prayerful consideration to provide for the filling of the pulpit ad interim, and to nominate for Senior Pastor one who possesses the requirements set forth in these articles. In carrying out this process, the Board of Elders shall directly, or through a search committee, communicate to the congregation regularly, and at reasonable intervals. Any church members who desire to suggest the name of an individual for consideration as Senior Pastor may do so in writing to the secretary of the Board of Elders.

When the Board of Elders intends to nominate a Senior Pastor they shall notify the membership by mail at least ten business days in advance. The notice shall include the name of the individual being considered for nomination. We encourage all church members desiring to submit questions, comments or suggestions concerning the individual being considered for nomination to do so in writing at least three business days before the meeting of the Board of Elders at which they intend to nominate an individual as Senior Pastor for the church.

The Board of elders shall then call a meeting, which shall be announced by mail to each member at least ten business days in advance of said meeting. We encourage all comments to be given to the secretary of the Board of Elders, signed and in writing, at least three business days prior

to this meeting for the election. Voting shall be by secret ballot. The meeting shall be presided over by the chairman of the Board of Elders. Only one person eligible to become Senior Pastor shall be considered or voted upon at a meeting. The election and its returns shall be conducted and announced publicly at the election meeting and shall be sent by mail to all church members promptly. A three-fourths majority of all votes cast shall be required for an election.

After The Senior Pastor has been duly elected a written call shall be tendered to him, signed by the Board of Elders. In this written call the Elders shall specify the financial support. A copy of this Constitution shall accompany the letter of call.

- B. Board of Elders: The Board shall consist of a minimum of seven members and a maximum as determined by the Board. Each Elder shall hold office as long as he is faithful to his calling and has the confidence of his brethren and the congregation.

The selection process shall be as follows:

1. The Elders will consider candidates for Eldership as leadership needs arise.
2. The candidate will participate in a two-year internship. During this time the candidate and the Elders will determine through prayer, Bible study and ministry partnership one's calling as an Elder.
3. Assuming one has completed the Elder internship, the Elders will then recommend the individual to the membership.
4. The members shall approve the final list of nominees. The approval of the congregation shall have, no less than three-fourths majority of those members approving in person or by absentee ballot shall be required for the approval of an Elder.
5. Following the recognition of an Elder by vote of the congregation, he shall be publicly installed in his office at a regular worship service by the prayer of the whole church and the laying on of hands by the existing Elders.

The Board of Elders shall elect a chairman and a secretary from its members. The chairman of the Board of Elders shall preside over the meeting of the Board of Elders and shall insure that the Board serves the congregation in a balanced manner addressing each area of responsibility as outlined in the duties. The term of chairman shall be for one or no more than two consecutive years. Thereafter a break of one year shall occur before assuming chairmanship again.

In recognition that the task of Eldership is significant and is accomplished while continuing care of family and work responsibilities, we understand that individual Elders may need to take leave of some of the responsibilities of Eldership for periods of time. Such sabbatical times will be arranged through mutual consent of the Elders. An Elder may resign his office without prejudice if for good and valid reasons he finds he is no longer able to discharge the duties required.

The Elders shall be mutually accountable to each other in order to safeguard against the continuation in office of an Elder who has rendered himself unqualified for such service.

## ARTICLE VIII

**TERMINATION OF AN ELDER, SENIOR PASTOR OR PASTOR:** An Elder, Senior Pastor or Pastor shall serve until removed by the Lord or by Three-Fourths majority vote of the Board of Elders.

When the Senior Pastor resigns to accept another call, or for reasons of his own choosing, he shall give the church three-months notice in writing of his intention to do so.

## ARTICLE IX

### PROPERTY AND ASSETS:

- A. The church shall have the power to receive, either by gift or purchase, and to hold such real, personal, or mixed property as is authorized by the laws of the State of Ohio and is deemed necessary for the functioning of the church, and shall have the power to dispose of such property by mortgage, bill of sale, deed or otherwise. All property shall be held in the name of the church.
- B. In case of division of the church caused by conflict (from which we pray God by His mercy to preserve us), all property and assets of the church shall be held in trust by those who abide by its Constitution for the continued operation and function of the church.
- C. In case of dissolution of the church organization, the property and all assets shall be sold. From the proceeds, first all current and long-term