

# CONSTITUTION OF FOREST BAPTIST CHURCH

## April, 2005

### Mission Statement of Forest Baptist Church

**Forest Baptist Church, under the headship of Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, purposes to be devoted to Biblical teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, prayer, and evangelism to the glory of God.**

### Article 1 – Organization

1. This church shall be known as **Forest Baptist Church**. It shall be affiliated with the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, supporting where possible its programmes, co-operating to the fullest possible extent with its officers, and naming delegates to its annual assemblies.
2. The regular officers of this church shall be Elders, Deacons, Trustees, Clerk, and Treasure. Such officers must be members of this church in good standing.
3. The affairs of spiritual welfare of the church shall be the responsibility of the elders of the congregation. The Council of Elders will be composed of Scripturally qualified men who are qualified to exercise this office. The qualifications are in three areas: A) moral and spiritual character, B) ability, and C) Spirit-given motivation (1 Timothy 3:1-7; 14-15; Titus 5:5-9). The temporal matters of the congregation shall be the responsibility of the deacons. The *final responsibility* for decisions shall rest with the elder.

### Article II – Financial Support

1. The activities of Forest Baptist Church shall be carried on without purpose of gain for its members, and any profits or other accretions to the organization shall be used solely to promote its objectives.

2. This church shall be supported as far as may be possible through the regular weekly giving of its members.
3. The missionary enterprises of this church and of the denomination shall be similarly supported.

### **Article III – Membership**

1. Any person giving evidence of repentance, professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and adopting the church's Statement of Faith, and its practice as expressed in its constitution, may, upon believer's baptism by immersion, be received into its membership.
2. Candidates for membership shall be interviewed by at least two elders for examination as to Christian experience and their understanding of and adherence to the church's Statement of Faith and Covenant as well as their purpose in joining. If recommended by the interviewing elders to the Council of Elders, such individuals shall be received into church membership.
3. Members from other churches holding the same faith and order may be received into membership by letters of recommendation or dismissal. The process shall be the same as that indicated in Section II, 2.
4. Other immersed believers, who, in consequence of any peculiar circumstances, have no letter of transfer may be received "by experience". The process shall be the same as indicated in Section II, 2.

### **Article IV – Ordinances**

1. The ordinance of believer's baptism shall be administered to candidates who have professed faith in Jesus Christ and given evidence of a personal Christian experience, upon satisfactory interview with two elders.
2. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed at least once a month and this ordinance shall be open to all those who

love Jesus Christ. The elders will normally preside at the Table of the Lord.

## **Article V – The Structure and Organization of the church**

Any ministry operating within the facilities of Forest Baptist Church or under the name of Forest Baptist Church or under its umbrella as an affiliated ministry shall be responsible to the Council of Elders of the church.

### **1. The Council of Elders**

The Council of Elders is to exercise oversight over the welfare of the congregation.

There shall be a plurality (at least 3) of Elders. An elder shall be appointed for as long as he remains qualified, gifted, and is willing to serve. Leaves of absence and sabbatical rests can enable an elder to be non-active from the Council of Elders for a period of time.

Elders will be appointed by the Council of Elders as they and the congregation recognize gifted and qualified men.

### **2. The Council of Deacons**

The Council of Deacons will be composed of scripturally qualified members (1 Timothy 3:8-13). The deacons will oversee the practical matters of financial and property administration, and will be accountable to the council of elders.

### **3. The Board of Trustees**

The trustees shall hold all church property ‘in trust’ for the congregation and must act according to the direction given to them by the church.

The Board of Trustees shall be three in number, and shall keep the requirements of the Trust Deeds of the church, and the

requirements of the Law. The Trustees are to maintain proper insurance coverage on property and contents and to make sure that the facilities are maintained in proper condition. The Trustees shall be concerned with the long term care of the property. Matters needing attention will be brought to the property committee, or, if necessary, to the church.

#### **4. The Clerk**

The clerk shall be elected annually. He/she shall keep a fair record of the proceedings of the church, conduct all necessary correspondence, and take responsibility for the careful preservation of all church records.

#### **5. The Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall be elected annually. He/she shall keep an accurate book of accounts, present monthly financial reports in an insert form to the congregation, an annual audited financial statement to the church at the annual meeting, and any other statements that may be required by the church from time to time.

An annual audit of all church financial records shall be conducted during January, by auditors selected by the church at the Annual Meeting.

### **Article VI – Meetings of the Church**

1. The church shall meet regularly at appointed times for Sunday Worship, and for mid-week services of prayer, praise, instruction in the Word of God or as determined from time to time by the Council of Elders of the church.

2. A quorum for a church business meeting shall be all members of voting age present when a meeting has been properly called, except in cases when a more stringent quorum has been agreed to by the membership.

3. The annual meeting for the church shall be held within seven weeks of the end of the calendar year, with the church fiscal year being January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>.

4. Business meetings of the church shall be held regularly at the call of the elders, at which time reports to the congregation from the Elders and Deacons may be received and items of a financial nature may be voted upon by the membership.

5. Special meetings may be called for the transaction of business of the church, as may be directed by the Council of Elders.

### **Article VII – Election of Officers**

The Deacons, Trustees, Clerk, and Treasurer shall be elected by majority vote after nomination at the annual business meeting of the church.

### **Article VIII – Representation in Association and Convention**

Delegates shall be appointed to represent the church at meeting of the Association and Convention. Delegates shall co-operate with other delegates in plans for advancing the Kingdom of God; and shall report to the church the proceedings of such gatherings.

### **Article IX – Constitution Amendments**

This constitution can only be amended by the procedure outlined hereunder:

1. The proposed amendment must be submitted to the clerk in writing and be signed by at least two other members from separate families.

2. The proposed amendment so submitted will be considered at a duly called church meeting provided that it is received in sufficient time to advise all members.

3. A proposed amendment will require a majority of a quorum at a duly called meeting.
4. Proposed amendments to this constitution cannot under any circumstances be tabled.