

CONSTITUTION OF BECKER BAPTIST CHURCH
BECKER, MINNESOTA
REVISED 1/30/2011

ARTICLE I. ORGANIZATION

1. The name of this church shall be the Becker Baptist Church of Becker, Minnesota.
2. The Becker Baptist Church was organized on October 31, 1909, in the Township of Becker, Sherburne County, Minnesota.
3. This organization is a religious corporation with the articles of incorporation filed with the County Register of Deeds May 23, 1910, and recorded in Book F of Miscellaneous Records, page 441.
4. The revised articles of incorporation adopted by this church for the purpose of clarifying the church name were filed November 6, 1970, document #113413 with the county Register of Deeds.
5. This church shall maintain affiliation with the Minnesota Iowa Baptist Conference and the Converge Worldwide – Baptist General Conference.

ARTICLE II. MISSION AND PURPOSE

This church exists as a community of Christians dedicated to the glorification of God and fulfillment of the command of Jesus to make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20) through:

1. Worship and the administration of baptism and the Lord's Supper.
2. Proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in all the world.
3. Instruction and exhortation of the believers as revealed in the Scriptures.
4. Ministry to the needs of all people.
5. Fellowship and encouragement of believers.

ARTICLE III. GOVERNMENT

Section 1. Policy

Recognizing Jesus Christ as the only Head of the Church, this congregation shall seek to ascertain and obey the will of our Lord in all matters of faith and practice.

The government of this Church is vested in the body of members who compose it. Thus the final authority for decision shall be the congregation to whom the Church Board, Deacon Board and the staff are responsible.

Section 2. Board

The trustees of the corporation shall be known as Church Board Members. Whenever the term "Church Board Member" is used, it shall include "trustee" and whenever the term "trustee" is used it shall include Church Board Member.

Section 3. Liability

Officers or any members of the Church Board, Deacon Board or committee member appointed and/or elected by this Church shall not be personally or individually liable for any error or mistake, act or omission for or on behalf of this Church, occurring within the scope of his or her duty as officer, board or committee member, excepting only for his or her willful misconduct or violation of law.

Section 4. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Church shall begin on the first day of January and close on the last day of December.

ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Admission

A person desiring to unite with this Church who is in substantial agreement with the faith and practice of the Church shall meet with the Deacon Board or committee thereof for consultation. In every case, candidates for membership shall give satisfactory evidence of faith in Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord, and baptism by immersion. Church membership will be granted upon recommendation of the Deacon Board and a majority vote of the members present at a meeting of the Church.

Section 2. Responsibilities and Rights

- A. The members of the Church are expected to attend its meetings to work for its growth, to fittingly represent their Lord and Church in the community, and to contribute regularly and according to their ability.
- B. Members shall strive with God's help to keep their Church obligations. They shall hold their Pastor(s) in esteem and pray for their Pastor(s) as well as other officers of the Church and work with them in carrying out the program of the Church. They shall endeavor to preserve the unity of the Church and, if at any time they find themselves opposed to the fundamental doctrines of this Church, they shall not seek to disrupt its fellowship but shall quietly withdraw from its membership.
- C. All members in good standing shall have equal rights, except that only those eighteen years of age and older shall be eligible to vote. Members of this Church have no property rights and upon termination of membership shall be entitled to no interest in the assets.

Section 3. Dismissal of Members

A member desiring to sever his or her membership shall submit a written request. Any member who joins another church will be dismissed from membership in this church. Dismissal shall be effected only after approval by a majority of the members present at a meeting of the Church.

Section 4. Discipline of Members

Members who persist in living unchristian lives and who habitually neglect their Church obligations may be removed from membership. The Senior Pastor and members of the Deacon Board shall seek to meet with all such persons in order to restore them to fellowship. Failing to see satisfactory evidence of repentance and reformation, the Deacon Board shall report the offenders to the Church, recommending removal from membership.

In all cases of grievances between members, the offenders shall be dealt with in accordance with the rules set forth in Matthew 18:15-20. No public charge shall be made until such reconciliation has been attempted. Charges shall be written and shall be submitted to the Deacon Board for further action and possible Church decision.

ARTICLE V. DOCTRINE

This Church accepts the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as inerrant in the original manuscripts and the inspired record of God's revelatory actions in human history and as the authoritative basis for its doctrine and practice. The confession of faith drawn up and adopted by this Church is regarded as an expression of the essential doctrines of grace as set forth in the Scriptures. This document shall be subject to revision by the congregation, as new insights from the Word of God shall indicate ways in which our faith and life may be brought into closer accord with the teachings of Scripture.

This Church also has adopted a covenant as a means by which its members may express their intent to accept the Lordship of Jesus Christ in the life of the Church and in the affairs of daily life.

ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended only at the Annual Meeting of the Church by a three-fourths vote of those qualified members present and voting. A quorum* must be present and voting. Notice of such amendment shall be conspicuously posted and shall be given from the pulpit on four successive Sunday morning services in advance of the annual meeting.

*For a definition of a quorum see By-Laws, Article 4, Section 4.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE 1. OFFICERS

Section 1. Positions

Moderator

*Clerk

*Financial Secretary

*Treasurer

*(At the discretion of the Church Board assistants to these positions may be elected)

Section 2. Qualifications

The qualifications of all officers are the spiritual virtues listed in I Timothy 3:8-13. The Moderator shall have been a Board member. Each officer must be a church member in good standing and shall have attained the age of eighteen years.

Section 3. Terms of Office

- A. The Moderator shall be elected for a three-year term, with a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms not to exceed 8 consecutive years.
- B. The Clerk, Financial Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected for terms of two years.
- C. Office shall be assumed upon the conclusion of the annual meeting, or in case of election at some other time than the annual meeting, with the meeting at which the election is held.
- D. The Assistant positions shall serve concurrently, if elected, with the same terms as their counterparts.

Section 4. Duties

- A. MODERATOR. The moderator shall preside at business meetings of the Church and of the Church Board. The Moderator shall be an ex-officio member of all committees without voting privileges.
- B. CLERK. The clerk shall keep minutes of all business meetings of the Church and of the Church Board and shall maintain the membership records.
- C. FINANCIAL SECRETARY. The Financial Secretary shall keep an accurate account of all monies received and oversee deposit of same in the name of the Church in a bank as directed by the Church Board. The Financial Secretary shall work under the supervision of the Stewardship Committee and the Church Board. Contributors will receive offering envelopes and a regular statement of account for contributions.
- D. TREASURER. The Treasurer shall keep an accurate account of all monies deposited in the bank, pay by check or electronic banking all approved obligations of the Church, make reports to the Church at each regular business meeting and at the annual meeting. The Treasurer shall work under the supervision of the Stewardship Committee and the Church Board.
- E. All officers shall be under the jurisdiction of the Church Board, be responsible thereto as well as to the membership, and shall render reports as either may direct.
- F. Resignation of any officer shall be in writing to the Church Board and will be effective on the date specified by the Church Board.
- G. The ASSISTANT (s), if elected, shall perform duties as needed when the regular officer is not available.

ARTICLE II. THE CHURCH BOARD

Section 1. Number of Members

The Church Board shall consist of: Moderator, Clerk, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Senior Pastor, the Deacon Board Chair, and the chairpersons of the six standing committees. Any assistants elected shall serve as non-voting members when performing the duties of their counterparts.

Section 2. Qualifications

See Article I, Section 2.

Section 3. Duties

- A. The Church Board shall have complete responsibility for the administration of all Church business subject to the final authority of the congregation. Every conveyance, sale, or mortgage of the Church deeded property must be ratified by the Church. All undesignated expenditures not provided for in the budget greater than \$2000 for any one item in any one fiscal year shall not be made without the approval of the Church.
- B. The Church Board shall annually present to the Church a proposed budget for adoption at the annual meeting.
- C. The Church Board shall maintain a "Manual of Operation" in which the duties of each officer and committee, as well as the Church Board itself, shall be defined.

Section 4. Terms of Office

Committee Chairpersons shall be elected for a three-year term with a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms, not to exceed eight consecutive years, in any one committee.

Section 5. Appointment

Should a position on the Church Board become vacant, the Church Board may appoint an officer or committee chair to fill the open position. The appointee must meet all qualification requirements of section 2 and may serve until the subsequent annual meeting, at which time the church shall elect the officer or committee chair.

Section 6. Removal

The Church Board may initiate the process by which Church officers, Deacon Board, and Church Board members may be removed from office. Sufficient reason for such action is the failure of members or officers to fulfill their responsibilities of office or for conduct impairing their effectiveness. A three-fourths majority vote of the Church Board is required to recommend removal to the Church. A simple majority vote of the Church is required to remove.

Section 7. Standing Committees

The Church Board shall carry out its work through standing committees. The Chairperson of each standing committee shall be elected for three years. Additional members shall be approved by the Chairperson and all committees shall require ratification by the Church at the annual meeting or subsequent business meeting.

- A. Worship. This committee shall exercise supervision, in conjunction with the Senior Pastor, over church services, monies budgeted to the Worship Committee, music, ushering and welcoming, and shall perform such other duties as the Church Board may direct.
- B. Stewardship. This Committee shall exercise general supervision over the stewardship of the annual Church budget: income as well as disbursements. It shall be responsible for the supervision of major expenditures in the operation and maintenance of the Church such as mortgage payments, insurance premiums, staff salaries and capital expenditures. It shall present an annual financial report to the Church. Prior to the annual business meeting, it shall present in writing to the Church Board a proposed budget for the coming fiscal year. The Committee shall also develop a plan of stewardship education for the Church. The Church Board may assign other duties to the Committee. The Church Treasurer and Financial Secretary shall be ex-officio members of this Committee with voting privileges.
- C. Education. This Committee shall exercise supervision over all educational and recreational ministries of the church. They shall appoint the Sunday School Superintendent and all lay volunteers for these ministries. They shall supervise monies budgeted to the Education Committee, and shall perform such other duties as the Church Board may direct. The Sunday School Superintendent shall be an ex-officio member of this Committee, with voting privileges.
- D. Building and Grounds. This Committee is charged with responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of the Church building, equipment and grounds. The Committee shall exercise supervision over monies budgeted for maintenance and repairs and shall perform such other duties as the Church Board may direct. The Committee shall recruit maintenance staff and recommend for employment such staff by the Church. The committee shall give opportunity for and encourage the Church family to share in volunteer workdays and cleaning days. General repairs and periodic maintenance may be completed, supervised, or contracted on behalf of the Church by the committee.

- E. Missions and Outreach. This Committee shall be responsible for the planning and supervision of the missions program and outreach activities of the Church. The Committee shall exercise supervision over monies budgeted for missions and outreach and shall perform such other duties as the Church Board may direct.
- F. Care Committee. This Committee shall concern itself with ministry to the needs of the Church family and the community at large. Activities and social events shall be planned to provide for encouragement and fellowship within the Church. The Committee shall seek to make the Church aware of ministry opportunities for which the congregation should be concerned. It shall supervise expenditure of monies budgeted for the Committee.

Section 8. Other Committees

- A. Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee comprised of the Church Moderator and at least four additional members shall be appointed by the Church Board to serve for one year. It shall be the duty of this committee to present the name of at least one qualified person for each elective office. The report of the Committee shall be conspicuously posted one week prior to an election.
- B. Auditing Committee. The Auditing Committee of three members shall be appointed by the Church Board to serve for a period of one year. They shall audit the books of the Financial Secretary and Treasurer and other treasurers once a year and at such other times as the Church Board may direct and submit a written report to the Church at the annual meeting of the prior year's financials.
- C. The Church Board may appoint such other committees as it may consider necessary.

ARTICLE III. DEACON BOARD

Section 1. Number of Members.

The Deacon Board shall be comprised of up to nine members, five to seven to be elected, plus the Senior Pastor and Church Moderator as ex-officio members with voting privileges. The Deacon Board Chair shall be elected annually following the annual church business meeting by the Deacon Board.

Section 2. Qualifications.

Each Deacon Board member must be a member in good standing of Becker Baptist Church for at least one year and a believer with a good reputation, full of the Spirit and wisdom. (Acts. 6:3)

Section 3. Duties.

The duties of the Deacon Board shall be to provide spiritual leadership, vision and oversight. Other areas of responsibility shall be evangelism and outreach, shepherding, follow-up and assimilation, the Lord's Supper and Baptism, visitation, church discipline and pastoral relations.

Section 4. Terms of Office.

Deacon Board members shall be elected for a three-year term with a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms, not to exceed eight consecutive years.

Section 5. Appointment

Should a position on the Deacon Board become vacant, the Deacon Board may appoint a deacon to fill the open position. The appointee must meet all qualifications of section 2 and may serve until the subsequent annual meeting, at which time the church shall elect the officer or committee chair.

Section 6. Removal.

The Deacon Board may initiate the process by which Church officers, Deacon Board, and Church Board members may be removed from office. Sufficient reason for such action is the failure of members or officers to fulfill their responsibilities of office or for conduct impairing their effectiveness. A three-fourths majority vote of the Deacon Board is required to recommend removal to the Church. A simple majority vote of the Church is required to remove.

ARTICLE IV. MEETINGS

Section 1. Public Meetings.

- A. The Church shall meet every Sunday for worship and may also schedule other meetings as deemed necessary.
- B. The observance of the Lord's Supper shall be held as the Deacon Board shall advise.

Section 2. Church Business Meetings.

- A. Matters of business requiring action by the Church may be presented and acted upon at any scheduled meeting of the congregation.
- B. Special business meetings of the Church may be held at any time by order of the Senior Pastor, Church Board, Deacon Board, or upon written request of a quorum of the membership. Such requests shall be submitted to the Moderator of the Church.
- C. The annual meeting and annual election shall be held in January.
- D. Quarterly business meetings may be held in April, July and October.
- E. In the event the Moderator is not available to conduct a regular or special business meeting, a chairman pro tem shall be elected in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

ARTICLE V. ELECTIONS

Section 1. Time

The Annual election of Church Board and Deacon Board members and officers shall be held during the annual meeting.

Section 2. Procedure.

The Nominating Committee shall present the name of at least one person for each open elective office. For the annual election these names shall be posted one week prior to the election. It shall be the privilege of any member present to nominate any eligible person for any office, provided the nominee has previously consented to serve. All elections shall be by written ballot, a majority of the ballots cast being necessary for the election of any officer.

Section 3. Vacancies.

Vacancies occurring during the year may be filled by appointment by the respective board. Appointees may serve until the subsequent annual meeting, at which time the church shall elect the officer, committee chair, or deacon.

Section 4. Quorum.

A quorum shall consist of at least 10 percent and not less than ten of the members. For the calling of or dismissal of a pastor the quorum shall consist of at least 30 percent of the members.

Section 5. Qualifications of Voters.

All matters pertaining to the purchase, sale or mortgaging of property shall be voted on only by members who are of legal age (eighteen years). There shall be no voting by proxy.

Section 6. Absentee Voting.

In any election in which a printed ballot is used, Church members may request an absentee ballot. Qualifications of absentee voters are set forth in Article V, Section 5. The absentee ballot shall be submitted prior to the call to order of the business meeting in which the election is being held.

ARTICLE VI. PASTORAL STAFF

Section 1. Qualifications

The Pastor(s) shall be in substantial agreement with the faith and practice of this church and shall be sympathetic and cooperative with the Converge Worldwide – Baptist General Conference and the Minnesota Iowa Baptist Conference. .

Section 2. Duties of the Senior Pastor.

The Pastor shall preach the gospel, administer the ordinances and exercise a concern for the spiritual needs of the Church. These duties shall specifically involve supervision of pastoral staff, administration of Board policy, and oversight, development, and communication of Church programs and goals. The Senior Pastor shall be ex-officio member of the Church Board and Deacon Board, with voting privileges, and all committees of the Church and its auxiliary organizations.

Section 3. Duties of other Pastoral Staff

All pastoral staff shall exercise a concern for the spiritual needs of the Church and be directly responsible to the Senior Pastor. A written description of duties and responsibilities shall be given to them at the start of their employment. They shall exercise responsibility for all duties for which they were called as well as those to which the Senior Pastor assigns them.

Section 4. Establishment of Pastoral Relationships

- A. Selection and duties of the Pastoral Search Committee for Senior Pastor. When it is necessary to call a Senior Pastor, a representative Pastoral Search Committee consisting of two members from the Church Board, two members from the Deacon Board, and three members at large, shall be named by the Church Board and ratified by the Church. This committee shall seek a suitable candidate for Senior Pastor of the Church and shall arrange for the Church to become acquainted with the candidate. In seeking a Senior Pastor, the committee shall consult the leaders of our Conference and take suggestions from members of the Church. It shall investigate the merits of the candidate, giving consideration to personal character, education, ministerial record and abilities, especially preaching ability. The Committee, in consultation with the Church Board and Deacon Board, shall formulate the terms of the call.
- B. Selection and duties of the Pastoral Search Committee for other Pastors. When it is necessary to call other members of the pastoral staff, a representative Pastoral Search Committee consisting of two members from the Church Board, two members from the Deacon Board, and three members at large, shall be named by the Church Board and ratified by the Church. This committee shall create a written description of the duties and responsibilities for the position. It shall seek a suitable candidate for the desired position and shall arrange for the Church to become acquainted with the candidate. In seeking other pastoral staff, the committee shall consult the leaders of our Conference and take suggestions from members of the Church. It shall investigate the merits of the candidate, giving consideration to personal character, education, ministerial record and abilities. The Committee, in consultation with the Church Board and Deacon Board, shall formulate the terms of the call.
- C. Extension of the Call. The recommendation of the Pastoral Search Committee concerning the call of a pastor and the terms of such call shall be presented to the Church at a special business meeting. Notice of such a meeting and its purposes shall be read from the pulpit on the Sunday prior to the meeting. A vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting shall be necessary to extend a call to anyone under consideration. A quorum must be present and voting. Only one candidate shall be presented to the Church at one time. The vote shall be by written ballot. When the call has been approved by the Church it shall be sent to the candidate. The candidate's written acceptance of the call shall establish the pastoral relationship as of the date agreed upon by the Church and the candidate.

Section 5. Working arrangements with pastors.

All pastoral salary and provisions for vacation and participation in opportunities for service or growth, such as the annual meetings of the Converge Worldwide – Baptist General Conference and the Minnesota Iowa Baptist Conference or professional conferences and workshops, shall be fixed at the time of the call and shall be annually reviewed by the Deacon Board. The Deacon Board Chair, in consultation with the Deacon Board, shall provide for an annual review of the relationship between the Senior Pastor and the Church. The Senior Pastor, in consultation with the Deacon Board, shall provide for an annual review of other pastoral staff members.

Section 6. Dissolution of Pastoral Relationship.

- A. A pastoral relationship may be terminated upon thirty days' notification in writing on the part of a pastor or the Church. The Pastor shall first give a written resignation to the Senior Pastor or the Deacon Board before it is presented to the Church at a regular or special business meeting. If in the judgment of the Church the continuance of the pastor's ministry should be undesirable, the relationship may be discontinued immediately, but the salary shall be continued for thirty days.
- B. Any proposal to dismiss a pastor shall be referred to the Deacon Board for its consideration before any action may be taken by the Church. The Deacon Board shall be required to present to the Church any written request for the dismissal of a Pastor when signed by 20 percent of the membership of the Church. Such action shall be taken at a regular or special business meeting and shall be by closed ballot with a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting to carry the motion for dismissal. A quorum must be present and voting.

- C. In the event that the Pastor wins a vote of confidence of the Church at such a meeting, all officers and board members signing such a petition mentioned above in Section 3.b. of this article shall automatically relinquish their office.

ARTICLE VII. OTHER EMPLOYEES

Other salaried Church workers shall be hired by the Church Board. A written description of duties and responsibilities shall be given to them at the start of their employment. They shall be responsible to the Senior Pastor. An annual review shall be performed by the Senior Pastor in consultation with the Church Board. Salaries, terms of relationships, and all benefits shall be fixed at the time of employment and may be changed upon recommendation of the Church Board, within the parameters of the General Fund budget.

ARTICLE VIII. AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

No organizations shall be formed or considered a part of the Church organization before its sponsors have submitted their plans to the Senior Pastor, Church Board, or Deacon Board for sanction and approval and such sanction and approval has been granted.

Each organization shall present a report concerning its activities and finances to the Church at its annual meeting.

ARTICLE IX. DISPOSITION OF CHURCH PROPERTY

Section 1. Division.

In Case of organic division of the Church, the Church properties shall belong to those members who abide by this Constitution. Should any controversy arise as to who is abiding by this Constitution, the question shall be submitted to the Stewards of the Minnesota Iowa Baptist Conference, and their decision shall be final.

Section 2. Dissolution

Should conditions arise where a consolidation with another church of the same denomination be advisable, the Church Board shall be authorized by the Church to negotiate the terms of such a consolidation in so far as the property is concerned. A report of such agreement must be made to the Church and approval granted by the Church before any legal papers are signed.

ARTICLE X. PARLIMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall guide the Church in all cases to which they are applicable, and in which they are not inconsistent with the Constitution or the special rules of order of this Church.

ARTICLE XI. AMENDMENTS.

These By-Laws may be amended at any regular or special business meeting of the Church by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting. A quorum must be present and voting. Notice of such amendment shall be conspicuously posted and shall be given from the pulpit on two successive Sunday morning services in advance of the meeting.