

MIDDLETOWN AREA BIBLE CHURCH
CONSTITUTION
&
BY-LAWS

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PREAMBLE

By the Grace of God, our Saviour, and our faith in Him, we, the members of the Middletown Area Bible Church, do ordain and establish the following articles, to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

ARTICLE I
(NAME)

The name of this church shall be the Middletown Area Bible Church of Middletown, Pennsylvania.

ARTICLE II
(PURPOSE)

This church, believing in the Bible, **preserved in the KJV 1611**, as the inspired Word of God, and acknowledging its adherence to all the teachings contained therein, declares its purpose:

- SECTION A. WORSHIP - The action performed corporately and individually by believers both toward God by way of form and to God by way of service.
1. To endeavor to declare the Gospel to our community through regular Sunday worship, midweek and special services.
 2. To proclaim the Gospel in order to reach the lost and teach the Word for the edification of the saints.
 3. To a ministry of music that is scripturally sound and presented in a manner pleasing to the Lord.
- SECTION B. SANCTIFICATION - Positionally it is the act of God whereby a man is immediately set apart unto Him through salvation. In life it is the process whereby the Holy Spirit sets the believer apart unto the Lord and away from sin.
1. To exhort each member to deny their worldly attitudes and demonstrate progressive spiritual growth.
 2. To encourage each member of the "Body of Christ" to become increasingly aware of the needs, both spiritually and physically, of fellow members as well as the ministry of the Gospel of Salvation to those without Christ.
 3. To teach each member of the church that together they will grow to the place of standing firm in the faith.
 4. To insure that the whole church is responding to the Word of God and the Holy Spirit so that the members and the whole world can see that God actively lives within the church.
- SECTION C. PROGRAMS -
1. For Believers in Christ:
 - a. Worship Services.
 - b. Bible School.
 - c. Prayer Service.
 - d. Children's Worship Service.
 - e. Adult/Youth Activities.
 - f. Training Sessions.

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- g. Visitation.
2. For reaching the lost for Christ:

- a. Seed Sowing Visitation.
- b. Bus Ministry
- c. Missionary Outreach.
- d. Evangelistic Ministries.

SECTION D. BUILDINGS -

1. Church Complex.
2. Parsonage.
3. Fellowship Hall.
4. Christian Academy.
5. Maintenance/Utility Facility.
6. Missionary Housing.
7. Parking Facility.
8. Recreational Area.

SECTION E. CHURCH EXTENSION - This church will endeavor to establish Mission Churches as the Lord leads.

ARTICLE III (AFFILIATION)

Affiliation with the local ministerium and inter-church cooperation -- This church will maintain total separation from all other churches and "Christian" organizations outside the "Body of Christ." Churches and organizations with which we will cooperate will be solely determined by this body according to Biblical principles.

ARTICLE IV (FAITH AND DOCTRINE)

SECTION A. ARTICLES OF BIBLICAL FAITH -(See Art. XIX)

1. The Holy Scriptures - We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the verbally inspired Word of God, the final authority for faith and life, inerrant in the original writings, infallible and God-breathed (II Tim. 3:16-17; II Peter 1:20-21; Mt. 5:18; Jn. 16:12-13). (See Art. IV, B, 6)
2. The Godhead - We believe in one Triune God, eternally existing in three persons -- Father, Son and Holy Spirit -- co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections (Deut. 6:4; II Cor. 13:14).
3. Creation - We believe that God created the Heavens and the Earth and all things therein from nothing in six (6) literal days (Gen. 1).
4. The Persons and Work of Christ -
 - a. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, became man without ceasing to be God, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men (Jn. 1:1-2, 14; Lk. 1:35).

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- b. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice; and that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead (Rom. 3:24-25; I Peter 2:24; Eph. 1:7; I Peter 1:3-5).

- c. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God, where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, Mediator and Advocate (Acts 1:9-10; Heb. 7:25, 9:24; Rom. 8:34; I Tim. 2:5; Jn 2:1-2).
- 5. The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit -
 - a. We believe that the Holy Spirit is the person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment; and, that He is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption (Jn. 16:8-11; II Cor. 3:6; I Cor. 12:12-14; Rom. 8:9; Eph.1:13-14).
 - b. We believe that He is the Divine Teacher who guides believers into all truth; and that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit (Jn. 16:13; I Jn. 2:20,27; Eph. 5:18).
- 6. The Total Depravity of Man - We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the race fell, inherited a sinful nature and became alienated from God; and, that man is totally depraved, and, of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition (Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 1:22-23, 5:12; Eph. 2:1-3,12).
- 7. Salvation - We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins (Eph. 1:7; I Peter 1:18-19).
- 8. The Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers -
 - a. We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's Power and are thus secure in Christ forever (Jn. 6:37-40, 10:27-30; Rom. 8:1,38-39; I Cor. 1:4-8; I Peter 1:5).
 - b. We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word; which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh (Rom. 13:13-14; Gal. 5:13; Titus 2:11-15).
- 9. The Two Natures of the Believer - We believe that every saved person possesses two natures, with provision made for victory of the new nature over the old nature through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit; and, that all claims to the eradication of the old nature in this life are unscriptural (Rom. 6:13, 8:12-13; Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:10; I Peter 1:14-16; I Jn. 3:5-9).

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- 10. Separation - We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Saviour and Lord; and, that separation from all religious apostasy, all worldly pleasures, practices and associations is commanded of God (II Tim. 3:1-5; Rom. 12:1-2, 14:13; I Jn. 2:15-17; II Jn vss. 9-11; II Cor. 6:14-7:1).
- 11. Missions - We believe that it is the obligation of the saved to witness by life and by word to the truths of Holy Scripture and to seek to proclaim the Gospel to all mankind (Mk. 16:15; Acts 1:8; II Cor. 5:19-20).
- 12. The Ministry and Spiritual Gifts -
 - a. We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowment of all His gifts; and, that the gifts of evangelists, pastors and teachers are sufficient for the perfecting of the saints today; and, that speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles gradually ceased as the New Testament Scriptures were completed and their authority became established (I Cor. 12:4-11; II Cor. 12:12; Eph. 4:7-12).
 - b. We believe that God does hear and answer the prayer of faith, in accord with His own will, for the sick and afflicted (Jn. 15:7; I Jn 5:14-15).

13. The Church -

- a. We believe that the Church which is the body of Christ, is a spiritual organism made up of all born-again persons of this present age (Eph. 1:22-23, 5:25-27; I Cor. 12:12-14; II Cor. 11:2).
- b. We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures (Acts 14:27, 20:17,28-32; I Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11).
- c. We believe in the autonomy of the local church free of any external authority or control (Acts 13:1-4, 15:19-31, 20:28; Rom. 16:1,4; I Cor. 3:9,16, 5:4-7,13; I Peter 5:1-4).
- d. We recognize the ordinances of water baptism by immersion and the Lord's Table as a scriptural means of testimony for the church in this age (Mt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42, 18:8; I Cor. 11:23-26).

14. Dispensationalism - We believe that the Scriptures interpreted in their natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined dispensations or rules of life which define man's responsibilities in successive ages. These dispensations are not ways of salvation, but rather divinely ordered stewardships by which God directs man according to His purpose. Three of these -- the age of law, the age of the church and the age of the Millennial Kingdom -- are the subjects of detailed revelation in Scripture (Jn. 1:17; I Cor. 9:17; Gal. 3:13-25; Eph. 1:10, 3:2-10; Col. 1:24-25; Heb. 7:19; Rev. 20:2-6; II Cor. 3:9-18).

15. The Personality of Satan - We believe that Satan is a

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person, the author of sin and the cause of the fall, that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and, that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire (Job 1:6-7; Isa. 14:12-17; Mt. 4:2-11, 25:41; Rev. 20:10).

16. The Second Advent of Christ - We believe in that "Blessed Hope," the personal, imminent, pre-tribulation and pre-millennial coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His redeemed ones; and in His subsequent return to earth, with His saints, to establish His Millennial Kingdom (I Thess. 4:13-18; Zech. 14:4-11; Rev. 19:11-16, 20:1-6; I Thess. 1:10, 5:9; Rev 3:10).

17. The Eternal State -

- a. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Mt. 25:46; Jn. 5:28-29, 11:25-26; Rev. 20: 5-6,12-13).
- b. We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they wait the first resurrection, when spirit, soul and body are reunited to the glorified for- ever with the Lord (Lk. 23:43; Rev. 20:4-6; II Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23, 3:21; I Thess. 4:16-17).
- c. We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious misery until the second resurrection, when with the soul and body reunited they shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment (Lk. 16:19-26; Mt. 25:41-46; II Thess. 1:7-9; Jude vss. 6-7; Mk. 9:43-48; Rev. 20:11-15).

18. The Nation Israel - We believe in the sovereign selection of Israel as God's covenant people; that she is now being disciplined because of her rejection of Christ; and that she will be re-gathered in the Holy Land and saved as a nation at the Second Coming of Christ (Rom. 9-11).

19. The First Day of the Week - We believe that Sunday is to be set aside for special worship in

commemoration of the Resurrection of Christ. This day should therefore be observed in a manner that calls to remembrance of Him (Mt. 28:1; Mk. 16:2; Lk. 24:1; Jn. 20:1; Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:2).

20. Marriage - We believe that holy matrimony was instituted of God and sanctioned by our Lord Jesus Christ and should be held in honor by all. This relationship should be between one man and one woman until separated by death and that any other separation and remarriage constitutes adultery (Gen. 2:23-24; Mt. 19:3-6; Rom. 7:2-3; I Cor. 7:39).
21. Divergent Doctrine - We believe that the foregoing statements in these "Articles of Biblical Faith" include only items in keeping with the Scriptural admonition to "speak those things which become sound Doctrine" (Tit. 2:1). We are, therefore, unalterably opposed to the

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inclusion of any item(s) that would be divergent in nature (II Tim. 3:16, 4:2).

SECTION B. MOVEMENTS CONTRARY TO FAITH -

1. Ecumenism - Ecumenism is that movement which seeks the organizational unity of all Christianity and ultimately of all religions. Its principal advocates are the World Council of Churches and the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. The local arm is Christian Churches United.
2. Ecumenical Evangelism - Ecumenical Evangelism is that effort to promote the Gospel by bringing fundamentalists into an unequal yoke with theological liberals and/or Roman Catholics and other divergent groups.
3. Neo-Orthodoxy - Neo-Orthodoxy is that theological movement which affirms: the transcendence of God, the finiteness and sinfulness of man, and the necessity of supernatural divine revelation of truth; but, while using evangelical terminology, seriously departs from orthodoxy in accepting the views of destructive higher criticism, in denying the inerrancy of the Bible as historic revelation, in accepting religious experience as the criterion of truth, and in abandoning important fundamentals of the Christian faith.
4. New Evangelicalism (Neo- Evangelicalism/New Conservatism) - These terms refer to that movement within Evangelicalism characterized by a toleration of a dialogue with theological liberalism. Its essence is seen in a emphasis upon the social application of the Gospel and weak or unclear doctrine of: the inspiration of Scripture, Biblical Creationism, eschatology, Dispensationalism and separation. It is further characterized by an attempt to accommodate Biblical Christianity and make it acceptable to the modern mind.
5. Charismatic Movement - This group is characterized by emphasis on speaking in tongues, healing, prophecy and second blessing. It crosses all social, ethical, and religious boundaries (Roman Catholic, Jews, Liberal Protestants, Pagans, etc.) causing association of darkness with light.
6. King James Bible - Due to the present day attack on the Word of GOD, we adopt the following statement:
 "We believe that the original writings, although non-existent as written in the hand of the human authors, are completely preserved in the Hebrew Masoretic and Greek Received Texts, and that the Authorized King James Bible (1611) is the only English translation which can now or ever be called THE infallible, inerrant, verbal, plenary Word of God."

We reject all modern translations such as: The New American Standard Version, The

New International Version, The New Scofield, The Revised Standard Version, Good News for Modern Man, The Living Bible, The New King James

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Version and others which merely contain the Word of God. (Psa. 12:6-7; 119:85; Mt. 24:35; I Peter 1:23-25).

We believe that these movements (this Article, Section B, Paragraphs 1-5) are out of harmony with the Word of God and the official doctrine and position of this church and are detrimental to the Work of God.

ARTICLE V (CHURCH COVENANT)

(See Art. XIX)

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God, angels, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ. We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity, and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrine; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and spread of the Gospel throughout all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and personal devotions; to educate religiously our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting and excessive anger and to be zealous in our efforts to advocate the kingdom of our Saviour. We further engage to watch over each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and, mindful of the rules of our Saviour, to seek it without delay. Humbly confessing our past sins, we pray for grace and strength to keep these, our holy vows, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ARTICLE VI (MEMBERSHIP)

SECTION A. REQUIREMENTS -

1. Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as his or her own personal Savior, and assenting by signed statement to the Articles of Biblical Faith and Constitution and By-Laws of this church, and having been baptized by immersion, may be received into membership.
2. Persons can be received into membership upon satisfactory examination by the Pastor and Deacons.
3. Applicants for membership shall be received by a majority of the voters recommendation of the Pastor and Deacons.
4. New members shall be publicly welcomed at any regular service by the members of the church in the reading of the

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church covenant and given the right hand of fellowship by the Pastor and Deacons.

SECTION B. DEFINITION OF MEMBERSHIP -

1. Active Member - One who regularly attends the services, contributes to, and participates in the work of the church according to New Testament teachings.
2. Associate Member - One recognized by the Pastor and Deacons as a member of good standing in this church, or of another no voting church of sound doctrine, but is unable to attend their local church on a regular basis because of circumstances beyond their control, i.e. missionaries, college students, servicemen, shut-ins...
3. Inactive Member -
 - a. When members move to another area of residence, they shall be considered nonresident members and their names automatically placed upon the "Inactive List."
 - b. When members, without just cause or reason satisfactory to the Pastor and Deacons, fail to attend regularly and/or demonstrate a lack of interest in the church and its' related programs for a period of two (2) months, they may be placed on the "Inactive List" and lose their right to attend, speak or vote at any official meeting of the church. The Pastor and Deacons shall make every effort to re-establish the member's fellowship with the church and may restore an inactive member to active membership whenever said member shall indicate a desire to be reinstated by their regular attendance at church for four (4) months.
 - c. The "Inactive List" will be reviewed by the Pastor and Deacons in March, June, September, and December. Names that have remained on the list for thirty (30) days or more may be removed from membership. Names placed on the "Inactive List" and removed from membership shall be announced at the next regular congregational meeting.
4. Re-instated Membership - Members removed must apply for membership in accordance with article VI; Section A. After the reinstated member faithfully attends church for a period of time equal to *three (3) times* their absence (see actual example below) they will be restored to their original membership date. [Example: Original Membership date 11/27/83; Removed 3/8/85; Reinstated 4/19/86. The time from 3/8/85 (3/85) to 4/19/86 (4/86) equals 1 year and 1 month. *Three (3) times* 1 year and 1 month is 3 years and 3 months. This member would be restored to original membership date of 11/27/83 on 7/89 (7/17/89) which is 4/86 + 3 months & 3 years.
5. Disciplined Member - Any member acted upon in accordance with Article VII, B. These members lose all rights to attend, speak and vote at all official meetings of the

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church unless called upon by the Pastor and Deacons. (See 3 a above & Article VII; Section B)

SECTION C. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP -

1. By Transfer - A letter of transfer to another church may be granted to any member in good standing at his/her request. Letters of transfer shall be granted only to churches of like precious faith and signed by the Pastor. Any member who shall unite with any other church without such letter shall have his name removed from the church roll immediately.
2. By Removal - It is right and in harmony with Scripture to expel from membership any:
 - a. Who holds false doctrine.
 - b. Who lives inconsistently with the teaching of the Word of God.
 - c. Who walks disorderly.
 - d. Who disturbs the unity, harmony, and peace of the church by unscriptural practices or attitudes.

SECTION D. INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY -

1. All public and private activities, such as regular attendance at all the services and meetings (including the ordinances of the Lord's Table and Baptism), the daily systematic reading of the Bible, private and family prayer, personal public testimony and winning of others to Christ shall be urged upon our members (Heb. 10:25; Mal. 3:8-11; I Cor. 16:2).
2. We also assert our conviction that proportionate giving, starting with the tithe (10%), is a distinct and positive command in the Scriptures and pledge ourselves to a systematic giving to the Church first (10%) and any other proportion of our income as we believe God requires of us (Gen. 14:20; Mal. 3:8-11; I Cor. 16:2).
3. We shall require of each other in our daily walk and conversation loyal obedience to all those moral precepts laid down in the Word of God so plainly as not to need definition (Eph. 2:2, 4:1,17, 5:2).

ARTICLE VII
(CHURCH DISCIPLINE)

The discipline of the church shall be formative and corrective and shall be entirely entrusted to the Pastor and the Deacons and shall be exercised according to the following principles:

SECTION A. FORMATIVE DISCIPLINE - The sanctifying influence of formative discipline as taught in I Cor. 12:12-27 shall be well understood. Every member will then be satisfied with his place and we shall all grow in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:21-22, 4:12-13; II Peter 1:5-8). By such observance, the church can build up its members and use the

ARTICLE VII & VIII

talent of both young and old. All who have been redeemed should live for Him and the church, and not for themselves.

SECTION B. CORRECTIVE DISCIPLINE - Corrective discipline implies imperfection and a tendency to sin and to cause offense. The censure, in the judgment of the Pastor and Deacons, may be suspension, deletion from the membership roll, or removal from the fellowship of this church. Every effort shall first be made by the member(s) to clear up difficulties and remove offenses. No offense, except those directly affecting the church, should be brought before the church, until the instructions of Christ have first been followed (Mt. 5:23-24, 18:15). If

the offender(s) refuse to reconcile and restore harmony, corrective action will then be taken by the Pastor and Deacons in conformity with the Scriptures (Mt. 18:16-17; II Thess 3:14-15) and the Constitution and By-Laws of this church. Corrective discipline, administered in the spirit of meekness, has for its aim the glory of God, the welfare and purity of the church, and the spiritual growth and/or restoration of the believing offender (Gal. 6:1). Any attempt to withdraw from membership after corrective discipline has been taken will not negate further and continued action. MABC reserves the right to inform any and all churches as it deems necessary to accomplish this Scriptural directive.

ARTICLE VIII (CHURCH COURT)

SECTION A. SCRIPTURAL BASIS - "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?" Since I Corinthians 6:1-8 clearly indicates that a brother should not go to civil court against another brother, this church hereby establishes a court which will be legal and binding before God and any Christians who bring their causes to it. At least one of these Christians must be a member of this church and both parties must voluntarily submit in writing to this court.

SECTION B. COURT OFFICIALS - This court shall be composed of the Pastor who will preside over it and the Deacons who will act as his advisors.

SECTION C. FINAL DECISION - The final decision given by the Pastor, after consultation with the Deacons, shall be legal and binding before the Lord. No further recourse is available.

Refusal to abide by this decision could result in censorship from church positions, suspensions from church activities, deletion from the membership roll or ultimately removal from any fellowship with this church.

ARTICLE IX

ARTICLE IX (CALLING A PASTOR)

SECTION A. CANDIDATES - Only such men after prayerful investigation and consideration of the Deacons shall be recommended who favorably answers the churches missionary questionnaire and will conscientiously sign without reservation the Articles of Faith, Constitution and By-Laws of the church. Each candidate will be voted on, one at a time, after presentation to the church. The congregation will not vote on more than one candidate at a time.

SECTION B. CALLING - The selection of the Pastor shall be voted upon by ballot at a meeting of the congregation called for that purpose, or at a regular annual or monthly meeting. Notice of such meeting shall be given at both services on the two (2) consecutive Lord's Days preceding. A majority vote of at least two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of the voters present shall be necessary to elect. (See Art. XII, Sect. D)

SECTION C. TERMINATION -

1. Regular - If at any time the Pastor shall make application to be released from the Pastorate, or if his ability to Pastor (example health) becomes such as to be detrimental to the welfare of this church, his services as Pastor shall be terminated by the congregation two (2) months from the date of intention. The Deacons shall have authority to consider this matter and make recommendations to the congregation, but it shall require a two-thirds () majority vote to dismiss the Pastor. The Pastor, who has served a minimum of one (1) year in either of these cases, will be given two (2) months severance pay upon departure.
2. Dismissal - Whenever dismissal proceedings may be in order against a Pastor on the grounds of proven immorality, heresy in doctrine, or failure to properly attend to his duties as Pastor of this church -
 - a. He shall be allowed to defend himself before the Deacons.
 - b. After a full hearing, the Deacons shall vote on the question whether or not they favor his removal.
 - c. If the Deacons vote in favor of his dismissal by a two-thirds () majority, the matter must then be placed before the membership at a special meeting, each voter present receiving a ballot on which to express approval or disapproval of the Deacons decision.
 - d. If a majority vote favors the dismissal proceedings initiated by the Deacons, the Pastor shall immediately be removed from office.
 - e. If the dismissal proceedings of the Deacons is not sustained by a majority vote , the Pastor shall be retained if the charge was failure to properly attend

ARTICLES IX & X

to the duties of the church. However, if the charge was that of immorality, or preaching heresy, then the Deacons can overrule the vote of the membership by a unanimous vote.

SECTION D. ASSISTANTS TO THE PASTOR - These men shall be chosen, called and terminated by the Pastor after consultation with the Deacons.

SECTION E. RECALL - There will be no recall of any Pastor who is released or dismissed in accordance with this Article, Section C.

ARTICLE X (GOVERNMENT)

SECTION A. OFFICERS -

1. Position - The officers of the church shall be: Pastor, Deacon-Trustee.
2. Pastor - Chairman - Trustee
 - a. Elected according to the method stated in Article IX, Section B.
 - b. Term of Office - The Pastor is called for an indefinite period. He shall remain as Shepherd of the flock as long as it is agreeable to both the Pastor and the people.
 - c. Vacancy - Shall be filled by supply until due process for calling another has been accomplished.
 - d. Pastor - wherever this term appears in this constitution, it refers to the Pastor-Chairman- Trustee
3. Deacon-Trustee -
 - a. Appointment and term - Qualified men appointed by the Pastor after consulting with the deacons serve for a term of three (3) years. The first term served would

- be for one (1) year only.
- b. Procedure - Upon request of the Pastor, voting members present at the November congregational meeting may submit in writing to him no more than three (3) names to be considered for the office of Deacon - Trustee.
 - c. Vacancy - Any vacancies in this office will be filled by appointment of the Pastor, after consultation with the deacons, for the period from the occurrence of the vacancy until the.
 - d. Deacons - Wherever this term appears in this Constitution, it refers to the
Deacon-Trustee.

SECTION B. DUTIES OF OFFICERS -

1. Pastor - Chairman - Trustee
 - a. The Pastor shall have the oversight of all operations, spiritual services, ministries, and ministrations of the

ARTICLE X

ordinances of the church; shall be ex-officio member of all Pastor/Deacon and committee meetings connected with the church or any of its organizations; act as moderator in the meetings of the church unless otherwise directed by this Constitution.(cf. Article XVII, Section B, Paragraph 3)

- b. The Pastor shall consider and decide upon all pulpit supply and special pulpit features.
 - c. The Pastor shall have control of the music of the church.
 - d. Any assistants to the Pastor or any employee of this church shall perform such duties as may be designated by the Pastor.
 - e. As the Chairman - See
 - f. As a Trustee - See this Article Section C (Old Paragraph moved to Section C)
2. Deacon-Trustee -
 - a. Deacon-Trustees must be members of the church in good standing for one (1) year, at least twenty-one (21) years of age and meet the qualifications set forth in God's Word (I Tim. 3:8-13; Lk 16:18). Found in the Pastor's interview questionnaire. (See add B)
 - b. Those elected to this office will serve in a two-fold capacity as indicated by their dual office title.
 - 1) As a Deacon, it shall be their responsibility to fully perform the duties of Deacon as set forth in the Scripture, cooperating with and advising the Pastor as Elder in the spiritual oversight of the church. *Under the Pastor and as his helpers they shall be specifically charged with:
 - a) *The spiritual advancement and interest of the church and watch-care of its members.
 - b) The preparation and serving of communion at the Lord's Table.
 - c) Assisting in baptismal services.
 - d) Examination and recommendation of candidates for church membership.
 - e) *Instruction of the spiritually ignorant, encouragement of the weak, reproving and reclaiming the erring, visiting and comforting the sick.
 - f) Acting upon and dismissal of members active and inactive.
 - g) *Exercising direction over church organizations.

- h) Being in attendance at all church services, visitations, meetings and functions.
- 2) As a Trustee - See this Article Section C (Old Paragraph moved to Section C)
- c. The Pastor will appoint from among the Deacon/Trustees one(1) man to serve as President of the Deacons, who shall moderate all meetings in the Pastor's absence.
- d. Installation - After the Deacon-Trustees have been appointed, but before they may assume office, they shall be ordained and installed as Deacon-Trustees in the following manner. They shall receive instruction from the Pastor and then appear before the congregation and respond affirmatively to the following questions:
 - 1) Do you believe the Scriptures as written in the Old and New Testaments and preserved in the KJB 1611 to be the Word of God and accept them as the only infallible rule of faith and practice?
 - 2) Have you adopted the Articles of Faith and Doctrine of this Church?
 - 3) Will you be cheerfully governed by the Constitution of this Church and promise to uphold its purity, unity and peace?
 - 4) Do you accept the office of Deacon-Trustee, and promise to perform all the duties of the office according to New Testament teaching?
 - 5) Will you wholeheartedly respect and back the Pastor in all decisions and voluntarily resign when you no longer can? (Except when the Deacon is exercising his responsibilities under Article IX, Section C, Paragraph 2.)

Then the question shall be put to the congregation as follows: Do you, the members of this church, acknowledge these brethren as Deacon-Trustees, and do you promise to pray for them that they may be spirit-filled and spirit-guided men, and will you yield to them that honor and obedience in the Lord to which they are entitled according to the Word of God and the Constitution of this church? (The members will answer in the affirmative by raising their hands and the Pastor shall proceed to consecrate the candidates to their office by praying as the Deacon-Trustees - devoutly kneel).

Declaration - The Pastor shall say, "By virtue of the authority vested in me by the Middletown Area Bible Church, and in recognition of the desires of these men to follow the calling of the Lord Jesus Christ, I hereby declare you to be Deacon-Trustees of the Middletown Area Bible Church, Middletown, Pennsylvania."

SECTION C. TRUSTEES - The Pastor and Deacons as Trustees shall have the responsibility to take charge of all church property. The Trustees shall not sell, mortgage, or otherwise dispose of real estate of this church, nor make a non-budgeted expenditures except on consent of two thirds () of the Trustees in emergency situations or a two-thirds () vote of voting members at a duly called business meeting. The trustees shall be responsible for presenting a yearly church budget to be presented to the church for adoption at the December business meeting.

SECTION D. SUPERVISORS - Supervisors such as Secretary, Clerk, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Missions Secretary, Bible School Superintendent, Head Usher, Assistant Principal, etc. shall be appointed by the Pastor.

SECTION E. DUTIES OF SUPERVISORS -

1. Secretary - The Secretary (A Deacon or Assistant to the Pastor) shall keep an accurate record of the minutes of each Pastor/Deacon meeting, notify the various members as to the time and place of meetings, have custody of the Church Seal and custody of the church records, deeds, legacies, insurance policies, bonds and notes. These records

- shall be kept in an on site depository designated by the Pastor. The appointment of these men shall take place at the first regular business meeting of the Deacons following the annual meeting. At the Annual Meeting of the church a report shall be rendered by him.
2. Clerk - The Clerk shall keep a record of all meetings of the congregation. It shall be the Clerk's duty to keep an on site official register of church members and their addresses; record all conversions, baptisms, dedications, and deaths; to issue all letters of transfer and dismissal at the direction of the Pastor and Deacons, and to issue certificates of baptism and dedication (to be signed by the Pastor). All records are the common property of the church. At the Annual Meeting of the church a report shall be rendered by him.
 3. Treasurer - The Treasurer will have custody of all finances. He or the Pastor shall authorize disbursement the same as directed by the budget and constitution. He shall keep a true and fair book of accounts and annually lay before the church a full and correct statement of all monies received and paid during the previous year, which statement shall have been previously examined by the Auditing Committee (See Article XIV, Section C). He shall also make a monthly report to the Pastor and Deacons which shall be available at monthly business meetings for the entire congregation. All expenditures exceeding one thousand (\$1,000) shall be paid by check signed by the Treasurer or Pastor which shall be countersigned by another authorized signatory. All expenditures shall be paid by the church General Fund checking account check. The Treasurer must have one other person or two in his absence (Head Usher or Deacon-Trustee) help count all offerings. There must always be at least two present with all moneys until they are counted. He shall offer Offering envelopes to those who desire them for use for their contributions, and keep a record of the amounts received from each contributor, which information shall be kept confidential and annually receipted. At the annual meeting of the church, he shall render a yearly total envelope contribution report. The Treasurer may be aided by a bookkeeper and/or offering record's keeper approved by the Pastor. The latter must only have knowledge of numbers and amounts, not names.
 4. Bible School Superintendent - The Bible School Superintendent shall have general charge and supervision of the Bible School and the Children's Church work of the church. The Superintendent shall appoint, as needed, teachers as he may think best, with the advise and approval of the Pastor. At the Annual Meeting of the church a report shall be rendered by him.
 5. Head Usher - The Head Usher shall have general charge and supervision of ushers and attendance records. At the Annual Meeting of the church a report shall be rendered by him.
 6. Junior Church Supervisor - The Junior Church Supervisor answers directly to the Pastor. He has delegated authority of all activities conducted (music, preaching, etc.) during Junior Church Services Sunday A.M. At the Annual Meeting of the church a report shall be rendered by him.
 7. ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL (MABC-ACADEMY) - Shall act as assistant Principal of MABC Academy. At the Annual Meeting of the church a report shall be rendered by him.
 8. Others - Duties as assigned by the Pastor and/or Policy Manual.
 9. Assistants - All assistants shall be cleared through and appointed by the Pastor.

ARTICLE XI
(MEETINGS)

SECTION A. PUBLIC WORSHIP - The regular services of the church for public worship shall be on Sunday: Bible School, Morning service and Sunday evening service and a mid-week prayer service.

SECTION B. BUSINESS MEETINGS -

1. Business - All meetings shall be attended by male voting members only.
2. The Annual Business Meeting of the church shall convene on the third Wednesday of January. Notice of this meeting shall be posted in the church bulletin read at a regular meeting of the church for public worship on the two (2) Sundays preceding such meeting.
3. Monthly business meetings (minimum of eight (8) per year) shall be held following the mid-week prayer service after the regular monthly Pastor/Deacon meeting to consider any matters that the Deacons may wish to present to the church. These meetings, being held on a regular basis, need only to be announced from the pulpit one (1) Lord's Day prior to the meeting, or posted in the Church Bulletin the Sunday prior to the meeting.
4. Special Business Meetings, including special corporate meetings may be called by the Pastor and Deacons. Notice of special meetings shall be read at a regular meeting of the church for public worship on the two (2) Services preceding the meeting. The matters to be considered at a special meeting shall be stated in the call, and no matter not thus mentioned shall be considered thereat.
5. Emergency Business Meetings may be called by the Pastor in an emergency to address the specific matter.
6. All Business Meetings shall be opened and closed with prayer.

SECTION C. ORDINANCES - The ordinances (See Article IV, Section A, Paragraph 13. d.), The Lord's Table and Believer's Baptism shall be administered as follows: The Lord's Table shall be observed on the first Lord's Day of each month and/or such times as directed by the Pastor. Believer's Baptism is to be administered by the Pastor at his discretion.

ARTICLE XII
(ELECTION & VOTING)

SECTION A. VOTING MEMBERS - Only male members eighteen (18) years of age and over may vote. These are referred to as voting members or voters in this document.

SECTION B. VOTING - May be done by voice, raised hands, or ballot at the discretion of the chairman.

SECTION C. QUORUM - The voting members present at any congregational meeting called in accordance with the requirements of this Constitution shall be considered a quorum for the transaction of business.

SECTION D. ELECTION PROCEDURES - Voting shall be by ballot in the calling or dismissal of the Pastor where a two-thirds () majority is required.

ARTICLE XIII
(DEPARTMENTS & WORKERS)

- SECTION A. FINANCES - All church ministries are to be handled through the church general fund. All receipts are to be tendered to the church treasurer without delay. Any separate accounts must be temporary and must be audited annually and at termination.
- SECTION B. ALL CHURCH MINISTRIES - Their purpose and area of authority shall be written in church policy.
- SECTION C. ONLY MEMBERS of this church will be allowed to perform services to this church. No person not a member of the Middletown Area Bible Church will be allowed to perform services in areas stated in this Constitution and church policy.
- SECTION D. SERVICE COVENANTS - No officer or person in the position of leadership of this church or any of its affiliated organizations shall be elected, appointed or employed who cannot subscribe in writing to the appropriate service covenant. Some of these positions are: Teachers, Substitute Teachers, Teacher's Aides, Song Leader, Choir Director, etc.

ARTICLE XIV
(COMMITTEES)

- SECTION A. PULPIT COMMITTEE - The duties and constituency of this committee are outlined in Article IX, Sections A and B. Their duties are fully contained in the period when the church is without a Pastor. It is the Pastor's responsibility to see that the pulpit is filled when he is on vacation, when special meetings are held and any other time necessary.
- SECTION B. AUDITING COMMITTEE - This committee shall consist of three voting members appointed by the Pastor and Deacons who will present the final audit to the Treasurer not later than March of the next year. All official records and documents shall be yielded to this committee upon request.
- SECTION C. OTHER COMMITTEES - Other committees may be called into existence and terminated by the Pastor and Deacons as and when they deem necessary.
- SECTION D. ADVISORY COMMITTEE - If at any time hereafter there should be no men or an insufficient number of men serving as Deacons, the Pastor may appoint a man or men to serve on an Advisory Committee to assist and advise him in those physical and financial matters normally handled by the Pastor and Deacons. An advisor has only a voice and no vote.

ARTICLE XV
(BIBLE SCHOOL)

- SECTION A. PURPOSE - Its purpose is to bring about the maturity of church members through effective teaching from the Word of God.
- SECTION B. FUNCTION - The Bible School is broken down into the following departments: Nursery (2-3 year old), Pre-school (4-5 year old), Primary, (K-3rd) Junior, (4th-6th) High School

(7th-12th) and Adult. The function of each department is geared to the level and need of that group.

SECTION C. MIDDLETOWN AREA BIBLE CHURCH ACADEMY

ACADEMY - Also, a Christian Academy will be added to our Church ministry as the Lord leads.

1. Middletown Area Bible Church Academy shall serve as the Educational ministry of the Middletown Area Bible Church.
2. The purpose of the Academy shall be to provide training spiritually and academically for all students enrolled. Students shall be enrolled without discrimination regardless of race, color, sex, or national origin.
3. The church Pastor shall serve as the Administrator/Principal of the Academy. All personnel of the Academy shall be responsible to the Pastor.

ARTICLE XVI (MISSIONS)

SECTION A. MISSIONARY SUPPORT PROCEDURE - This church supports missions and missionaries at home and overseas. An organization or person desiring support shall contact the church by letter. Upon receipt of this letter, the Pastor will forward a missionary questionnaire to the applicant. When this form is returned, the Pastor will review it for conformance to the doctrine and standards of this church. Under no circumstances will missionaries or mission representatives be granted pulpit privileges without following the above procedures. They will upon pastoral approval present their ministry to the church. The Pastor will then decide upon acceptance or rejection of the organization or person. If acceptance is granted, they will then be presented to the voting members for approval and the Pastor will establish the amount of support based on the preceding year's "Faith Promise" outcome. The Pastor will, on an annual basis thereafter forward the "Missionary/Questionnaire Update" which must be signed by the missionary and/or organization representative.

SECTION B. MISSIONARY APPOINTEE SUPPORT - All missionary appointees will receive full monthly support for the first two (2) years. For the next two (2) years they will receive half their monthly support with the other half going into a fund in their name. If the missionary goes on the field within this period they will receive the money held for them. If after four (4) years the missionary is still on deputation the situation will be reviewed by the Pastor and Deacons. The candidate may be extended under the program of half and half on a yearly basis or terminated and the escrow applied to other mission needs.

ARTICLE XVII (MANNER OF CONDUCTING BUSINESS)

SECTION A. GENERAL PROCEDURE - The Pastor shall act as Moderator at all business meetings and govern them by "Roberts Rules of Order" in matters not otherwise regulated by these By-Laws. He shall not, however, act in such capacity while any matter pertaining to his conduct (Article IX, Section C, Paragraph 2) is before the church. In case of the absence, or inability of the Pastor to act as Moderator at any meetings, the President of the Deacons or any Deacon duly selected by him, shall serve in that capacity. The clerk of the meeting shall be the secretary of the church or an individual appointed by the Pastor/Chairman. The order

of business shall be as follows:

1. Prayer and call to order by Moderator.
2. Reading of the Minutes.
3. Report of the Treasurer.
4. Reports of other officers and committees.
5. Election of officers and elected committees.
6. Old business.
7. New business.
8. Announcements.
9. Adjournment and prayer. (All meetings shall be officially opened and closed with prayer).

SECTION B. BUSINESS PROCEDURE -

1. All items of business handled during a business meeting are to be presented by the Pastor and Deacons.
2. The following steps will be followed:
 - a. Voting members may bring ideas to individual Deacons or Pastor.
 - b. The Pastor and Deacons will then discuss these ideas. An individual reply and/or motion will result. The Pastor and Deacons will also originate all business.
 - c. Any item brought to the business meeting by the Pastor and Deacons will be handled as a motion. This motion may not be seconded by the Pastor, any Deacon or Assistant Pastors or any members of their immediate family.
 - d. The motion is then discussed and voted upon. A majority vote in favor will carry the motion. A majority vote not in favor will cause the motion to be taken back to the Deacons.
 - e. If the Deacons, after much prayer and discussion, decide to enact the same motion, a two-thirds () majority vote will be necessary to override it.
 - f. If the Deacons modify the motion, it will then be handled like a new motion.
3. The Pastor has a voice, vote, and veto on all matters of business.

SECTION C. BUSINESS MEETING IN-PUT PROCEDURE - During new business, the voting members may bring up business. This will then be handled at the Pastor/Deacon Meeting and reported at the next business meeting.

ARTICLE XVIII (ORDINATION & LICENSURE)

SECTION A. ORDINATION

1. STATEMENT - When in the judgment of the Pastor, a man in this membership is called to the Christian Ministry, it shall be within the power of the Pastor to call and conduct a council for ordination. The ordaining council shall thoroughly examine all applicants for ordination as to their call to the Christian Ministry, education, Christian experience, reputation, character, doctrinal belief, and demonstrated efficiency in Christian service.
2. RESTRICTIONS - The following shall not be ordained to the ministry -
 - a. One who has not served six (6) months as a Pastor, Assistant Pastor or in definite Christian work in such a manner as to convey reasonable evidence of God's Call

- to the Ministry.
- b. One who is addicted to the use of intoxicating liquor, drugs, or use of tobacco in any form; or one who brings disrepute upon his ministry through worldly practices and associations (Rom. 12:1-2; II Cor. 6:14-18; James 4:4; I John 2:15).
 - c. One who is divorced or married to a divorcee (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6).
 - d. No one will be ordained whose doctrinal position is at variance with Article IV of this Constitution.
3. COUNCIL - The Pastor shall select and present to the voting membership the ordination council membership. Upon their acceptance with a two-thirds () majority vote, the council may then proceed to examine the candidate for ordination. Upon a two-thirds () recommendation of the council, the ordination service will then be conducted.
 4. SERVICE - An ordination service will be conducted following approval of the council.
 5. REVOCATION - It shall be within the province of the Pastor and Deacons to discipline, even to revoking the ordination credentials of any minister, ordained under this constitution, if said minister is found guilty of any of the practices in this Article, Section B, Paragraph 2, after an impartial trial has been conducted by the Pastor and the Deacons.
 6. APPEAL - The minister under trial shall have the privilege to appeal his case to the voting members within sixty (60) days after the decision of the Pastor and Deacons.

SECTION B. LICENSURE

1. STATEMENT - When in the judgment of Pastor a man in this membership is called to "full time" ministry at this local church, the Pastor, after consultation with the Deacons, will initiate licensure.
2. RESTRICTIONS - Same as Section A, Paragraph 2 excluding the requirements to serve for six (6) months as a Pastor or Assistant Pastor.
3. REQUIREMENTS
 - a. The candidate must submit to the Pastor a personal doctrinal statement for his review and approval. No one will be licensed whose doctrinal position is at variance with Article IV of this Constitution.
 - b. The candidate will be licensed to minister under the direct supervision of the Pastor. The license does not authorize any actions independent of the auspices of Middletown Area Bible Church.
 - c. The candidate will meet with the Pastor and Deacons for final questioning. Upon approval of the Pastor after consultation with the Deacons a license will be issued.
 - d. The candidate will then be ordained at a regular church service with the Pastor and Deacons laying hands on him.

ARTICLE XIX (AMENDMENTS)

This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds () vote of the voting members present at any regular or special meeting, providing the proposed amendment has been read to the congregation at each Sunday evening service for the two (2) Sundays preceding the said meeting and providing an exact copy of the proposed amendment has been conspicuously posted in the church on the four (4) Sundays immediately preceding said

meeting. Article IV, Section A, and Article V of this Constitution shall not be changed or amended.

ARTICLE XX
(DISSOLUTION)

In the event of the dissolution of the corporation, all of its debts shall be fully satisfied. None of its assets or holdings shall be divided among the members, but shall be irrevocably dedicated by the Deacons to another non-profit religious organization(s) in agreement with the letter and spirit of this Constitution, and in conformity with the requirements of the United States Internal Revenue Service Code of 1954 (Section 501 c-3) or any subsequent amendment thereto.