

THE CONSTITUTION OF
MONCLOVA ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH
AT
MONCLOVA, OHIO

ARTICLE I

NAME

- Section 1. NAME: The name of this organization shall be the MONCLOVA ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH, INC.
- Section 2. ORGANIZATION: The organization took place September 23, 1973, in Maumee, Ohio.
- Section 3. INCORPORATION: This organization was incorporated March 26, 1974.
- Section 4. AFFILIATIONS: This church shall maintain fraternal fellowship and cooperation with the North American Baptist General Conference and its local Great Lakes Association. It shall send annual reports for their records and, so far as is practicable, shall cooperate with the Denominational agencies and societies in furthering the Gospel of Jesus Christ and in sending delegates to their Annual Meetings.

ARTICLE II

STATEMENT OF FAITH

The following statements are a summary of those doctrines which are essential to the practice and propagation of true Biblical Christianity, and therefore, are held by this church.

A. Of the Scriptures

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men supernaturally inspired; that it has truth without an admixture of error for its matter; and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the age, the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to man, the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried.

By the "Holy Bible" we mean that collection of sixty-six books from Genesis to Revelation, which as originally written, not only contains and conveys the Word of God, but IS the very Word of God.

By "Inspiration" we mean that the books of the Bible were written by holy men of old as they were moved by the Holy Spirit in such a definite way that their writings were supernaturally and verbally inspired and free from error, as no other writings have ever been or ever will be inspired.

B. Of the True God

We believe that there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all honor, confidence, and love; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit – equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

C. Of the Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person; equal with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature; that He was active in the Creation, and in His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled; that He convicts of sin, of judgment and of righteousness; that He bears witness to the Truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony; that He is the agent in the New Birth; that He seals, endures, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies, and helps the believer.

D. Of the Devil or Satan

We believe that Satan was once holy, and enjoyed heavenly honors, but through pride and ambition to be as the Almighty, he fell and drew after him a host of angels; that he is now the malignant prince of the power of the air, and the unholy god of the world. We hold him to be man's great tempter, the enemy of God and His Christ, the accuser of the saints, the author of all false religions, the chief power back of the present apostasy, the lord of the Antichrist, and the author of all the powers of darkness – destined, however, to final defeat at the hands of God's Son, and the judgment of an eternal justice in hell, a place prepared for him and his angels.

E. Of the Creation

We believe in the Genesis account of creation, and that it is to be accepted literally, and not allegorically or figuratively; that man was created directly in God's own image and after His own likeness; that man's creation was not a matter of evolution or evolutionary change of species, or developments through interminable periods of time from lower to higher forms; that all animals and plant life were made directly, and God's established law was that they should bring forth only "after their kind." We believe that Genesis 1:1 is the record of the heavens and the earth being brought into existence in a basic form on the first day of the Creation Week; that this word plus the work of bringing light into existence constitute, not two works of God widely separated by millions or billions of years, but, the two works of God on Day One of Creation Week; that each of the six days plus the seventh day of rest in Creation Week was not an age, but a day such as each day in the command of God to work six days and to rest one day.

F. Of the Fall of Man

We believe that man was created in innocence under the law of his Maker, but by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and happy state, in consequence of which all of mankind are now sinners, not by constraint, but by choice; and therefore under just condemnation without defense or excuse.

G. Of the Virgin Birth

We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten of the Holy Spirit in a miraculous manner; born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can ever be born of woman, and He is both the Son of God, and God the Son.

H. Of the Atonement for Sin

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God. Who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon Him our nature, yet without sin, honored the divine law by His perfect obedience, and by His death made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins; that His atonement consisted not in setting an example by His death as a martyr, but in the voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the just dying for the unjust, Christ the Lord, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree; that having risen from the dead, He is now enthroned in heaven and uniting in His wonderful Person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection. He is in every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate and an all-sufficient Savior.

I. Of the Grace in the New Creation

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again; that the new birth is a new creation in Jesus Christ; that it is instantaneous and not a process; that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God; that the new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension – not by culture, not by character, not by the will of man – but wholly and solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel; that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life.

J. Of the Freeness of Salvation

We believe in God's electing grace; that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the Gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent and obedient faith; and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the Gospel; which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation. We do not accept the theological concepts known as "unconditional election," "limited atonement," and "irresistible grace."

K. Of Justification

We believe that the great Gospel which Christ secures to such as believe in Him is justification; that justification includes the pardon of sin, and the gift of eternal life on principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works or righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood, His righteousness is imputed unto us.

L. Of Repentance and Faith

We believe that repentance and faith are solemn obligations, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the quickening Spirit of God; thereby, being deeply

convicted of our guilt, danger and helplessness, and of the way of Salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession and supplication for mercy; at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ, and openly confessing Him as our only and all-sufficient Savior.

M. Of the Church

We believe that a church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers associated by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the Gospel, and observing the ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word; that its officers of ordination are pastors or elders and deacons, whose qualifications claims and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures. We believe that the true mission of the church is found in the Great Commission: first, to make individual disciples; second, to build up the Church; third, to teach and instruct as He commanded. We do not believe in the reversal of this order; we hold that the local church has the absolute right of self government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; and that the one and only superintendent is Christ through the Holy Spirit; that it is Scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the Gospel; that every church is the sole and only judge of the measure and method of its cooperation; and that on all matters of membership, policy, government, discipline, benevolence, the will of the local church is final.

N. Of Baptism and the Lord's Supper

We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, with the authority of the local church, to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life; that it is prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation to the Lord's Supper, in which the members of the church, after solemn self-examination, commemorate together the dying love of Christ by the sacred use of bread and the fruit of the vine.

O. Of the Perseverance of the Saints

We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguished them from superficial professors that a special Providence watches over their welfare; and that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto eternal salvation.

P. Of the Righteous and the Wicked

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked, that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in His esteem; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and under the curse, and this distinction holds among men both in and after death, in the everlasting felicity of the saved and the everlasting conscious sufferings of the lost.

Q. Of Civil Government

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good of human society; that magistrates are to be prayed for and conscientiously honored and obeyed, except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming Prince of the kings of earth.

R. Of the Resurrection and Return of Christ and Related Events

We believe in and accept the sacred Scriptures upon these subjects at their face and full value. Of the resurrection, we believe that Christ arose bodily "the third day according to the Scriptures"; that He ascended "to the right hand of the throne of God"; that He alone is our "merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God"; and "That this same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven" – bodily, personally and visibly; that the "dead in Christ shall rise first"; that the living saints "shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump"; and that "the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His Father David"; and that "Christ shall reign a thousand years in righteousness until He hath put all enemies under His feet."

We believe that seven years before Christ returns to set His feet on the earth and to rule one thousand years over all the peoples of the earth, He will appear in the clouds in the air, "the dead in Christ shall rise"; that "we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord of the air," that the rise and rule of the Antichrist and terrible judgment of God shall come to pass during the seven year period of time between the appearing of Christ in the air to call out His saints, living and dead, and His return to earth over all people for one thousand years.

S. Of Missions

We believe that the command to give the Gospel to the world is clear and unmistakable, and that this commission was given to the churches.

T. Of the Grace of Giving

We believe that God's method of financing His earthly work of spreading the Gospel to all nations, the care of the churches and the support of the ministry is by the tithes and offerings of His people, that it is to be given to the Lord through His church or storehouse to be distributed as directed by the leadership of the Spirit as the need arises. The time to tithe is upon the first day of the week; that everyone is accountable to the Lord for the one tenth of his income, and that tithing was instituted long before the law was ever given and was practiced by the early church.

ARTICLE III

COVENANT OF FELLOWSHIP

Having been led, as we believe by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and lord 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 most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We promise that we will watch over and counsel one another in the spirit of brotherly love, that we will remember one another in our prayers, and that we will aid each other in sickness and distress.

We further agree, 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 doctrines; to give it a sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin; and to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel to all nations.

We further covenant to maintain family and private devotion; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to live carefully in this present world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from everything that will cause our brother to stumble or that will bring reproach upon the cause of Christ; and to strive to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, that amidst evil and good report we will humbly and earnestly seek to live to the honor and glory of Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

ARTICLE IV

MEMBERSHIP

- Section 1. Admission by Baptism: Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ before the church, giving evidence of regeneration, and adopting the views of faith and practice held by this church may, upon baptism by immersion in water, be received into its membership.
- Section 2. Admission by Letter: Any person to whom the ordinance of baptism by immersion had been administered may be received by letter from another church of like faith and practice upon satisfactory public confession before the church, of faith in Christ as Savior and Lord.
- Section 3. Statement of Faith: Persons who are not members of other Baptist churches, but who have been baptized by immersion upon public profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and who accept the views of faith and practice as approved by this church, may be received into membership by virtue of their experience. A former member of a church of like faith and doctrine, whose membership has lapsed due to dereliction on his part or her part, may be restored to fellowship on profession of faith and the recommendation of the church.

- Section 4. Application and Procedures: All applicants for admission to the membership of the church, having responded to a public invitation for membership or salvation, shall be considered on the basis of his/her testimony. Membership shall then be received according to the terms of sections 1-3 as stated above.
- Section 5. Release from Membership:
- A. Any member desiring membership in any other Evangelical body may be granted a letter of recommendation to that church. Such letters are to be sent by the Church Clerk to the other church.
- B. Any member bringing reproach upon this church by immoral or unchristian conduct, being contentious, is harmful to the unity, faith and fellowship of the church and shall be dealt with according to Matthew 18:15, and Romans 16:17. If there is still no disposition to walk according to Christian practice, said member shall be dropped from the membership roll following the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, concurred in by the majority of the congregation.
- C. Inactive Members: Any person who, without adequate reason absents himself for more than a period of one year from active life with the church may be dismissed in accordance with the procedures as set forth in Article IV, Section 5 (B), relating to the methods of release from membership.
- Section 6. When members may be received into or released from membership: Members may be received or released at any regular service or business meeting of the church. Official membership will be recognized after satisfactory testimony has been given.

ARTICLE V

OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

- Section 1. Pastor: The pastor shall be a regularly ordained minister of the Baptist denomination, theologically conservative, evangelistic in spirit, and missionary minded. It shall be his duty to preach stately to the church, to administer the ordinances, and in cooperation with the Advisory Committee, to perform various duties, including visitation, that pertain to the office as shepherd (I Timothy 3:1-7). By virtue of his office, he shall be executive member of all committees of the church. He shall preside at all church services, and business meetings.
- Section 2. Advisory Committee: The Advisory Committee shall consist of the Pastor, active Deacons, Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurer. The Advisory Committee is not limited in number, but should be a workable number for effectively discussing church matters. If there are not enough deacons, the

Pastor may nominate layman to serve on the Committee. Upon being nominated, the laymen should be elected by the church members at a business meeting.

Section 3. Deacons: A deacon shall be a member of the church in good and regular standing for at least one year. He should be in agreement without reservation to the church Covenant and the Doctrinal Statement. He also must be qualified scripturally in accordance with I Timothy 3:1-13, and Titus 1:5-9. The Deacons shall be elected at an Annual meeting of the Church. Deacons will be elected to a term of two years, and may be re-elected as often as the church desires.

Duties of the Deacons: They shall be associated with the pastor in having charge of the spiritual interests of the church; the supervision and maintenance of the membership roster; the consideration of matter of discipline, and administration of the ordinances, the distribution of the Emergency Fund for the help of the needy; and they shall advise with the Pastor, as to the services for public worship. They shall visit the sick and distressed, and in the absence of the pastor, provide pulpit supply for the Sunday services and leaders for the prayer meetings. Deacons shall, unless otherwise provided, be responsible for all worship services in the absence of the Pastor.

Section 4. Church Clerk: The Church Clerk shall keep the minutes of all Business Meetings of the church and meeting of the Advisory Committee. The Church Clerk shall preserve and properly file all letters, reports, and documents, and shall deliver immediately to the successor all books, files, records, and other documents of the church.

Section 5. Treasurer: The Treasurer, with the assistance of the church bookkeeper or accountant, shall keep an accurate accounting of all money received and make disbursements thereof, and shall submit a written report monthly to the Advisory Committee and annually to the Church. He shall keep a bank account in the name of the church in a bank or banks. He shall oversee bookkeeping of the church.

A. Financial Books: The financial records of the Treasurer shall be open at all times to the inspection of the Deacons and the Pastor of the church.

B. Church Contributions: (1) The Treasurer shall keep a record of all contributions of the church, shall keep a separate record with each contributor, showing at all times the amount of each contribution, shall render Annual Statements to all members, and shall make a statement of account to any member when called for by him and statements when requested by the Deacons. (2) The Treasurer shall deposit the offerings in the church bank accounts. (3) Only the Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer,

church accountant or bookkeeper and the pastor shall be allowed access to the church records of the contributions. The church contribution records shall be deemed to be confidential information and are not to be disclosed.

- Section 6. Assistant Treasurer: He shall assist the Treasurer and function in his place during his absence.
- Section 7. Trustees: The trustees will be the three actively serving deacons with the longest time of service as a deacon for Monclova Road Baptist Church. Their purpose will be to serve as the officers of the church in the case of dissolution of the church.
- Section 8. Others: Other officers of the church and/or its related ministries may be elected or appointed as they are needed.
- Section 9. (A) Election of Officers: Election of officers shall take place annually. Deacons and Trustees will be elected to two-year terms. Church Clerk, Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer will be elected to two-year terms and may hold consecutive terms in office. They should be evaluated by the pastor following each term served.
- (B) Election of Officers: Officers shall be elected at the Annual Church Business Meeting.
- Section 10. Church Staff: The pastor may bring in such staff as he feels are necessary to assist him in providing for the church. They will be employed at a salary agreed to by the Advisory Committee and work under the direct supervision of the pastor, or indirectly under him and directly under the supervision of a staff member appointed by the pastor.
- Section 11. Standards for Leaders: All elected or appointed leaders of this church and/or any of its related ministries shall be saved, active members of the church in agreement with the doctrinal position of the church, tithers, soul winners, loyal to the pastor and living a separated Christian life.

ARTICLE VI

FISCAL YEAR

The Fiscal Year of the church shall be from January 1 to December 31, inclusively.

ARTICLE VII: CHURCH GOVERNMENT

CHURCH MEETINGS

- Section 1. Church Government: Each member of the church will have an equal voice in its government, exercised through a vote at regular or called business

meetings. The pastor shall serve as moderator of all business meetings. If the church is without a pastor, the chairman of the Advisory Committee will serve as moderator. The church shall vote on the pastor, deacons, treasurer, and assistant treasurer, laymen committee members and clerk; establishment or modification of major policies; the buying, selling, or mortgaging of church properties; and the annual church budget. Other matters of lesser importance will be handled by the pastor, staff, and deacons within their prescribed responsibilities.

- Section 2. The Annual Meeting: The Annual Meeting of the church shall be held the last Sunday evening of January.
- Section 3. Special Meetings: Special Business Meetings of the church may be held at any time by order of the Pastor or Advisory Committee, providing a notice appears in one bulletin previous to the called meeting. And/or the membership shall be notified by mail and/or announcements shall be made at all services on the Sunday preceding the called meeting.
- Section 4. Quorum: A quorum shall consist of all active members present at an officially called business meeting.
- Section 5. Public Worship: The stated meetings for this church for public worship shall be Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and one evening during the week.

ARTICLE VIII

PASTORAL RELATIONS

- Section 1. Pulpit Committee: When necessary to call a pastor, it shall be the duty of the Advisory Committee to take the necessary steps to secure pastoral candidates. The Advisory Committee shall investigate the merits of every man under consideration in regard to his character, education, ministerial record and expository Bible preaching ability in determining his fitness for the pastorate. When a suitable man has been found, the Advisory Committee shall recommend him to the church for its consideration. The Advisory Committee shall be authorized to arrange for interim pulpit supply whenever necessary.
- Section 2. Calling a Pastor: The calling of the pastor shall come before the church at a regular or called business meeting after the proper notification, as provided under Article VII, Section 3. A vote of three fourths of the voting members present shall be necessary to extend a call to anyone under consideration. Only one candidate shall be presented to the church at one time. The official vote shall be by written ballot.

Section 3. Termination of the Pastorate:

(a) The term of this office may be ended upon sixty days notice in writing on the part of the church. The pastor shall first give his resignation to the Deacons or present it to the church.

Notice of resignation of Pastor due to health reasons, 30 days notice.

Pastor's resignation – two weeks notice

Church dismissal – immediately

(b) All action to dismiss the Pastor shall be referred to the Committee of Deacons for its consideration before action is taken by the church. The Deacons may present to the church a request. Such action shall be taken at a regular or called business meeting and shall by written ballot with voting members present necessary to carry the motion for dismissal in accordance with Article VII, Section 3.

ARTICLE IX: DESIGNATED GIVING

All designated giving will be used as requested, unless it is not considered to be in the churches best interests. If this is the case, the Advisory Committee may authorize its use in another area.

ARTICLE X: BUDET ADJUSTMENTS

The Advisory Committee may adjust the annual church budget if the need arises.

ARTICLE XI: DISSOLUTION

No part of the property or other buildings of this church shall ever inure to the benefit of any donor, member, officer of the church, or any individual. If for any reason the church is dissolved, all assets shall be distributed equally to organizations selected by the church and recognized as religious and charitable in nature by the Internal Revenue Service.

ARTICLE XII: AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION

This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present at a called business meeting announced for that purpose.

Amendment 1:

Monclova Road Baptist Church is prohibited from hiring any person (male or female) who is living in or participating in a homosexual lifestyle. We believe homosexuality is an immoral lifestyle and a violation of Holy Scripture (Bible). Any person that is currently employed by Monclova Road Baptist Church and participates in any homosexual activity is to be immediately released from his/her position.

Amendment 2:

Monclova Road Baptist Church authorizes any staff pastor or any other person duly authorized by our church to carry a concealed weapon, providing they have a concealed weapon license.