

**GATEWAY
COMMUNITY
CHURCH**

ONSTED, MICHIGAN

**Church Constitution
By-Laws
Statement of Faith**

2.12.01

CONSTITUTION, BY-LAWS, FAITH AND DOCTRINE
OF THE
GATEWAY COMMUNITY CHURCH
ONSTED, MICHIGAN

Article I Name

Section I The name of the church shall be Gateway
Community Church.

Article II Object

Section I This church shall be an independent, sovereign, self-governing body of
believers, subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body or
organization. It shall maintain a separatist position towards all modernistic
and unbiblical organizations. It shall promote fellowship among God's
people of like precious faith; put forth every possible effort to disseminate
the Gospel; and proclaim the whole Counsel of God.

This organization shall not only be thoroughly evangelical, but it shall also
be aggressively evangelistic.

Article III Membership

Section 1 Members may be received into this church by vote of the members present at
any business meeting or Sunday service.

Section 2 Members may be received into this church on confession of faith in Jesus
Christ and having been baptized by immersion.

Section 3 Members may be received into this church by letter from other churches of
like faith and practice. Those wishing to transfer membership must also
attend Gateway's membership class.

Section 4 Mode of procedure: All applications for admission and restoration to the
membership of this church shall be made to the membership committee

consisting of the Pastor and Deacons, and no application shall be considered without their recommendation.

- Section 5 Membership with this church may be dissolved in the following manner:
- (a) By Letter – A member may, on application, receive a letter of recommendation and dismissal from this church to unite with another of the same faith.
 - (b) By Exclusion – When this church, in the exercise of its lawful authority and discipline, shall see fit to withdraw fellowship from one proven to be unworthy of membership, his/her connection with this body is dissolved and thenceforth ceases.
 - (c) By death.
 - (d) By written request.

Article IV Officers

- Section 1 The officers of this church shall be the Pastoral staff, the Board of Deacons, Clerk, Treasurer, Missionary Treasurer, and there may be two Deaconesses at the option of the church.
- Section 2 The Pastoral staff shall be elected by a three-fourths majority of the qualified voters present at a business meeting called for that purpose.
- Section 3 Besides the regular duties belonging to the office of a Pastor, he shall be ex-officio member of all committees.
- Section 4 The Board of Deacons shall consist of three (3) to seven (7) members. The members of this Board shall be elected for a three-year term. All vacancies in this Board shall be filled by the action of the Board until the next annual meeting, and then a person to fill the unexpired term shall be elected.
- Section 5 As required by the laws of the State of Michigan, three Deacons shall be appointed to serve as Trustees to perform all the duties and powers therein. These shall be appointed for one year at the Deacons' first regular meeting after the annual election.
- Section 6 The Pulpit Committee shall be made up of two (2) Deacons and two (2) members not on the Deacon board; whose duties shall be to see that in case

of vacancy in the pulpit, candidates are provided and cared for, and to furnish any temporary supply when needed.

- Section 7 The duties of the Deacons shall be to prepare and assist in the Communion Service, examine candidates for membership in this church, to confer with the Pastor regarding the spiritual work of this church, and oversee care and maintenance of this church campus and building.
- Section 8 The Clerk shall be appointed by Deacons from the membership of the church for a term of one year. The duties of the Clerk shall be to record minutes for membership meetings, evaluate membership yearly and report to Deacon Board. (See Article IV Section 6, Article VI Section 5.)
- Section 9 A Financial Accountant shall be appointed by the Deacons at the first Deacon meeting of the year and the appointment will continue until the Accountant shall resign or the Deacons shall terminate that person's service.
- Section 10 The Missionary Treasurer shall be appointed by the Deacons from the membership of the church at the first Deacon Meeting of the year and the appointment will continue until the Treasurer shall resign or the Deacons shall terminate that person's service.
- Section 11 The Financial Secretary shall be appointed by the Deacons after the Annual Church Membership meeting to maintain records of financial contributions and give receipts for tax purposes.
- Section 12 The Financial Committee shall consist of the Financial Chairman, Financial Secretary and counters and recorders appointed by the Deacons at the first Deacon Meeting of the year. The counters and recorders shall count offerings, record, and make deposits to the bank on a rotation basis.

Article V Committees

- Section 1 The standing committees of this church shall be: Pulpit Committee, Finance Committee, and Missionary Advisory Committee. Duties of the Pulpit Committee and its membership are outlined in Section 6 of Article IV.

Section 2 It shall be the duty of the Trustees to plan for the raising of all money needed for current expenses and missionary giving, to determine the amount to be used for such expenses, and to authorize the payment of same.

Section 3 The Missionary Advisory Committee shall be composed of the following members: One (1) appointed Deacon, Missionary Treasurer, and three (3) members elected from the congregation at the Annual Election Meeting. The elected members shall serve three (3) year terms, one elected each year. The Senior/ Lead Pastor shall be ex officio.

All mission budget expenditure proposals shall be generated through the Missionary Committee. Members are free to make suggestions to them.

Article VI Annual and Special Meetings

Section 1 This Church shall convene a meeting on the second Sunday of December of each year for the purpose of electing officers.

The annual meeting of this Church shall be held during the month of January to approve the proposed budget.

During the month of October the Executive board (the pastors and deacon board) shall appoint a Nominating Committee consisting of three to five (3-5) members (one (1) Deacon and two to four (2-4) members) for the purpose of nominating qualified candidates for elected positions within this church as outlined in Article IV. Nominations shall be announced two (2) Sundays preceding the Annual Election Meeting.

Section 2 In addition to the Annual Meeting, this church shall hold regular Biannual Business Meetings. The actual date of the meeting shall be announced two (2) Sundays preceding the meeting.

Section 3 Special meetings for the transaction of any business may be called by the Pastor or two (2) Deacons, notices of which shall be read publicly at two (2) services of the church.

Section 4 The voting age on all matters shall be eighteen (18) and only active members in good standing shall be allowed to vote.

Section 5 Inactive members – Members of the Gateway Community church who have not fellowshiped in person at any scheduled meeting of the church for a period of six (6) consecutive Sundays, shall be placed on the inactive membership list.

When aware of those individuals in this situation, the Deacons will appoint two (2) members to make a personal visit to inquire about their attendance with the goal of restoring them to active fellowship in our church.

Continued inactivity for one year will result in notification by mail that the individual (s) have been placed on the inactive list. After another year of inactive status, their name (s) will be automatically removed from membership.

Restoration is always our goal. It will be accomplished by re-establishing a pattern of regular attendance to the services of our church. The membership list is to be evaluated annually.

Article VII Auxiliary Organizations

Section 1 This church regards as integral all organizations formed for the purpose of administration which use the facilities of this church properties. All such organizations shall be subject to this church at all times and shall not adopt any rule which is in conflict with the Constitution and program of this church.

Article VIII Miscellaneous

Section 1 Each committee shall have power to effect its own organization.

Section 2 The church year shall run from January 1 to December 31.

Section 3 Eighteen (18) members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Section 4 This Constitution may be altered or amended by a majority vote at a regular business meeting. Paper and digital copies of amendments or alterations shall be made available to the public on two (2) Sundays immediately preceding such meeting.

Section 5 This Constitution shall displace all previous Constitution and By-Laws of this church and shall go into effect immediately.

Article IX Church Covenants

Section 1 Historical Covenant

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, 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 doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of this church, the relief of the poor and the spreading of the Gospel to all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions, to religiously educate 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 behavior; to determine to practice holy living in relation to habits, entertainments; and all other areas of life.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense; but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

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.

The Gateway Membership Covenant

Having received Christ as my Savior and Lord and having been baptized and being in agreement with Gateway's statements, strategy and structure – I now feel led to unite with the church family at Gateway Community Church. In doing so, I commit myself, to the best of my ability with God's help, to God and to the other members to do the following:

1. I will protect the unity of my church

- ... by acting in love toward other members
- ... by refusing to gossip
- ... by following the leadership's spiritual guidance using biblical principles

2. I will share the responsibility of my church

- ... by praying for its growth
- ... by inviting the unchurched to attend
- ... by warmly welcoming those who visit

3. I will serve the ministry of my church

- ... by discovering my gifts and talents
- ... by being equipped to serve beside my pastors and leaders.
- ... by developing a servant's heart

4. I will support the testimony of my church.

- ... by attending faithfully
- ... by striving to live a godly life
- ... by giving regularly

Article X Church Discipline

When it is deemed necessary, the process of Church Discipline will be as follows:

1. The directions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15-18 will be followed.
 - a. After careful prayer and seeking God's Will, a private meeting will be conducted by two (2) designated Deacons with the offending party/parties. The purpose is to restore the party/parties to full fellowship with the Lord and this church.
 - b. If restoration is not brought about by the meeting, the Deacons will call a meeting of the church membership to discuss the situation and ask for congregational action on the dismissal of the offending party/parties from the membership of this church.

- c. The party/parties having congregational action taken against them shall be notified.
 - d. At any stage of these proceedings, if it is impossible to make an appointment, the Deacons shall attempt to notify the party/parties by various means so that accurate records of disciplinary actions are kept.
2. The goal in any action of church discipline, will be the restoration of the offending party/parties (Galatians 6:1) to fellowship with the Lord and this church. It is not our goal to disfellowship anyone without first making every effort to follow the guidelines of our Lord in Matthew 18:15-18. Excommunication will be the last resort, and only when the best efforts at restoration have been taken.
 3. Careful records of attempts to establish meetings and the time and place of actual meetings will be kept. These will, of course, be kept confidential.

Article XI Articles of Faith and Doctrine

(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 writing, infallible and God breathed. (II Timothy 3:16, 17; II Peter 1:20, 21; Matthew 5:18; John 16:12, 13)

(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 Corinthians 13:14)

(3) The Person and Work of Christ

(a) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful mankind. (John 1:1-2, 14; Luke 1:35)

(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. (Romans 3:24, 25; I Peter 2:24; 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, and Advocate. (Acts 1:9, 10; Hebrews 7:25, 9:24; Romans 8:34; I John 2:1, 2)

(4) The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

(a) We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgement; 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. (John 16:3-11; II Corinthians 3:6; I Corinthians 12:12-14; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 1:13, 14)

(b) We believe the Holy Spirit is the Divine Teacher who guides Believers into all truth; and that it is a privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit, (John 16:13; I John 2:20, 27; Ephesians 5:18)

(5) The Total Depravity of Mankind

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin, mankind fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God; and that mankind is totally depraved, and of himself utterly unable to remedy his lost condition. (Genesis 1:26, 27; Romans 3:22, 23, 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3, 12)

(6) Salvation

We believe that salvation is the free 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. (Ephesians 1:7, 2:8-10; John 1:12; I Peter 1:18, 19)

(7) 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. (John 6:37-40; 10:37-30; Romans 8:1, 38, 39; I Corinthians 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. (Romans 13:13-14; Galatians 5:13; Titus 2:11-15).

(8) The 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. (Romans 6:13, 8:12, 13; Galatians 5:16, 25; Ephesians 4:22-23; Colossians 3:10; I Peter 1:14-16)

(9) Separation

We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord; and, that separation from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices and associations is commanded by God. (II Timothy 3:1-5; Romans 12:1, 2, 14:13; I John 2:15-17; II John 9-11; II Corinthians 6:14-7:1)

(10) 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. (Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8; II Corinthians 5:10, 20)

(11) 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 the speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles gradually ceased as the New Testament Scriptures were completed and their authority became established. (I Corinthians 12:4-11; II Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 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; (John 15:7; I John 5:14-15; James 5:13-15)

(12) The Church

- (a) We believe that the Church, which is the body and espoused bride of Christ, is a spiritual organism made up of all born-again persons. (Ephesians 1:22, 23; 5:25-27; I Corinthians 12:12-14; II Corinthians 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 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11; Rev. 2 & 3)

(13) Dispensationalism

We believe in the dispensational view of Bible interpretation, that is the literal, grammatical, historical, and plain reading of the scriptures, but

reject the extreme teaching known as Hyper Dispensationalism, such as that teaching which opposes either the Lord's table or water baptism as a Scriptural means of testimony for the Church in this age. (Matthew 28:19, 20; Acts 2:41, 42, 18:8; I Corinthians 11:23-26)

(14) The Personality of Satan

We believe that Satan is a 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; Matthew 4:2-11, 25-41; Revelation 20:10)

(15) The Second Advent of Christ

We believe in that Blessed Hope the personal, imminent, pretribulation, and premillennial coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His redeemed ones, and in His Saints, to establish His Millennial Kingdom. (I Thessalonians 1:10, 4:13-18, 5:9; Zech. 14:4-11; Revelation 3:10, 19:11-16, 20:1-6)

(16) The Eternal State

- (a) We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgement and everlasting punishment. (Matthew 25:46; John 5:28, 29; 11:25, 26; Revelation 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 await the first resurrection, when spirit, soul and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord. (Luke 23:43; Revelation 20:4-6; II Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 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 soul and body reunited, they shall appear at the Great White Throne of Judgement, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment. (Luke 16:19-26; Matthew 25:41-46; II Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6 and 7; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 20:11-15)