

Northland Bible Baptist Church of Grand Rapids, Minnesota

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

We, being born-again and Bible-believing Christians, in the interests of growth in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ through worship and service; and that we might fulfill our responsibilities to propagate the Word of God, both at home and abroad; and to contend earnestly for the faith; and that all things might be done decently and in order; do institute the following statement of our faith and principles for our governance.

ARTICLE I - Name

The name of this body shall be Northland Bible Baptist Church of Grand Rapids, Inc.

ARTICLE II - Doctrinal Statement

THE SCRIPTURE

We believe that the Holy Bible, as originally written, was verbally inspired in its entirety and the product of Spirit-controlled men (*Acts 1:16, 28:25; II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:19-21*); that it is the truth without any error (*Psalms 119:105, 130, 160; Luke 24:25-27, 44-45; John 17:17*); 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 (*Psalms 19:7-11, 119:89; Proverbs 30:5-6; Isaiah 8:20; John 1:45, 5:39, 12:48; Romans 3:4, 15:4; I Peter 1:23; Revelation 22:19*); that it is to be interpreted literally, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

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

B. 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. Thus, the WORDS rather than the MEN were inspired and free from error, as no other writings have even been or ever will be inspired.

THE TRUE GOD

We believe that there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite, omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent Spirit, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth (*Genesis 17:1; Exodus 20:2-3; Psalm 83:18, 90:2, 147:5; Jeremiah 10:10; John*

4:24; *I Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 4:6*); inexpressibly glorious in holiness and worthy of all possible worship, confidence, and love (*Exodus 15:11; Mark 12:30; Romans 11:33; I Timothy 1:17; Revelation 4:11*); that in the unity of the Godhead, there are three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit; equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption (*Matthew 28:19; John 10:30, 15:26, 17:5; Acts 5:3-4; I Corinthians 2:10-11; 12:4-6; II Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 2:18; Philippians 2:5-6; I John 5:7*).

We believe in the absolute deity of the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ; that He was divine as no other man can be, being very God of very God, existing from all eternity, co-equal with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit and of the same substance and nature; that He never ceased to be God for one instant and that His humiliation did not consist in laying aside His deity, but only the laying aside of the independent exercise of His divine attributes, except as led by the Holy Spirit; that as man, He was miraculously conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of Mary, a virgin of the House of David; that by His incarnation, He became partaker of two natures, human and divine, so that He is perfect man as well as perfect God (*Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:26-38; John 1:1-14; Philippians 2:5-6; I John 5:20*).

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person, equal with God the Father and God the Son (*John 14:16-17; Matthew 28:19*) and of the same substance and nature (*Luke 1:35; John 14:26; Hebrews 9:14*); that He was active in the creation (*Genesis 1:1-3*); that in His relation to the unbelieving world, He restrains Satan until God's purpose is fulfilled (*II Thessalonians 2:7*); that He convicts of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (*John 16:8-11*); that He bears witness to the truth of the gospel in preaching and testimony (*John 15:26; Acts 5:30-32*); that He is the Agent of the new birth, sealing, baptizing, regenerating, indwelling, filling, guiding, teaching, witnessing, interceding, sanctifying, and helping (*Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:15, 24:49; John 1:22, 14:17, 26, 16:13; Acts 11:16; Romans 8:14, 16, 26-27; I Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:13-14, 5:18; II Thessalonians 2:13; I Peter 1:2*).

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, fell (*Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:14-17*) and drew after him a host of angels (*II Peter 2:4; Jude 6; Revelation 12:9*); that he is now the prince of the power of the air, and the unholy god of this world (*Matthew 4:1-3; John 14:30; II Corinthians 4:3-4; Ephesians 2:2*). We hold him to be man's greatest tempter (*I Thessalonians 3:5; I Peter 5:8*), the great deceiver (*Revelation 12:9; 13:14*), a murderer, a liar and the father of all lies (*John 8:44*), the enemy of God and His Christ (*Zechariah 3:1; Matthew 13:26, 37-39; Luke 22:3-4; I John 3:8*), the accuser of the saints (*Revelation 12:10*), the author of all false religions, the chief power behind the present apostate (*Mark 13:21-22; II Corinthians 11:13-15*), the lord of the anti-Christ (*I John 2:22, 4:3; II John 7*), and the author of all the powers of darkness.

Having been defeated by Christ at Calvary (*John 12:31; Colossians 2:15*), he is destined (*II Thessalonians 2:8-11; Revelation 13:13-14*) to the final defeat at the hands of God's Son (*Revelation 12:7-9, 11, 16; 20:1-3*) and to the judgment of an eternal justice in hell, a place prepared for the devil and his angels (*Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10*).

THE CREATION

We believe in the Genesis account of creation, and that it is to be accepted literally, and not allegorically or figuratively (*Genesis 1:1; Exodus 20:11; Nehemiah 9:6; Jeremiah 10:10; John 1:3; Acts 4:24, 17:23-26; Romans 1:20; Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 11:3; Revelation 10:6*); that man was created directly in God's own image and after His own likeness (*Genesis 1:26-27; I Corinthians 11:7*); that man's creation was not a matter of atheistic evolution, theistic evolution, evolutionary change of species, or development through interminable periods of time from lower to higher forms (*Genesis 2:7, 2:21-23*); that all animal and vegetable life was made directly, and God's established law was that they should bring forth only "after their kind" (*Genesis 1:11, 24*).

THE FALL OF MAN

We believe that man, in the person of the first Adam, was created in innocence under the law of his Maker, but by voluntary transgression, fell into sin (*Genesis 3:1-6, 24; Romans 5:12, 19*), thus, plunging the whole race into condemnation and death, so that now all mankind is born in sin (*Psalms 51:5*) and became willful sinners with the first expression of personal choice (*Ezekiel 18:19-20; Acts 1:25; Romans 1:18; 3:10-19; Ephesians 2:1-3*). That man is, by nature, utterly void of that state required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil (*Psalms 1:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:23*), and therefore under just condemnation, without defense or excuse (*Romans 1:20, 28, 32; Galatians 3:22*), and therefore, eternally separated from God and cast into the lake of fire (*Revelation 20:14-15; 21:8*).

THE ATONEMENT FOR SIN

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace (*Acts 15:11; Romans 3:24; Ephesians 2:8-9*) through faith in the redemption wrought by the Son of God, Who, by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon Himself our nature, yet without sin, honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and by His death made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins (*Isaiah 53:4-7; Matthew 18:11; John 3:16; Romans 3:25; I Corinthians 15:3; II Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 2:7; Hebrews 2:14*); that His atonement consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a martyr, but was 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 cross (*Isaiah 53:11; John 10:18; Galatians 1:4; Philippians 2:8; Hebrews 12:2; I Peter 2:24; 3:18*); that, having risen bodily from the dead, and ascended into Heaven, He is now seated at the right hand of God the Father (*Hebrews 1:3*). Uniting in His wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection, He is, in every way, qualified to be a suitable, compassionate, and all-sufficient Savior and High Priest (*Isaiah 53:12; I Corinthians 15:20; Hebrews 4:14-15, 7:25, 9:12-15; I John 2:2*).

REPENTANCE AND FAITH

We believe that repentance and faith are solemn obligations (*Acts 20:21*) and also inseparable graces (*Mark 1:15*), brought about in our souls by the Spirit of God (*John 16:7-11*); thereby being convicted of our guilt, danger, and helplessness, and of repentance, confession, and supplication for mercy (*Psalms 51:1-4, 7; Isaiah 55:6-7; Luke 18:13; Romans 10:13*), at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ and subsequently confessing Him openly as our only and all-sufficient Lord and Savior (*Luke 12:8; Romans 10:9-11*).

THE NEW BIRTH

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again (*John 3:3*); that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus (*II Corinthians 5:17*); that it is instantaneous and not a process (*John 3:6-7; Acts 2:4, 16:30-33; I John 5:1*); that in the new birth, the one dead in trespasses and sins is made partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God (*Romans 6:23; II Corinthians 5:19; Ephesians 2:1; Colossians 2:13; II Peter 1:4*); that the new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension, not by culture, not by character, not by works, nor by the will of man, but wholly and solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with the Word of God, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel (*John 1:12-13; 3:8; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; I Peter 1:23*); that its proper evidence appears in the fruits of repentance, faith, and newness of life (*Luke 3:8; Galatians 5:22; Ephesians 5:9*).

THE FREENESS OF SALVATION

We believe in God's electing grace (*Romans 8:29-30; Ephesians 1:4-5; I Peter 1:2*); that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel (*Isaiah 55:1; Romans 10:13; Revelation 22:17*); that now is the accepted time (*II Corinthians 6:2*) for all to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (*Isaiah 55:6; Acts 16:31*), and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth except his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel (*John 3:15-16, 5:40; Ephesians 2:4-5*); which rejection results in his condemnation (*John 3:18, 3:36*).

JUSTIFICATION

We believe that a man is justified by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; that justification includes the forgiveness of sin, and the gift of eternal life (*Isaiah 53:11; Acts 13:39; Romans 3:24; 5:1, 9*) that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood, His righteousness is imputed unto us (*Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17, 4:1-8; Galatians 2:16, 3:11; Titus 3:5-7; Hebrews 10:38*).

SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we have been made partakers of His holiness (*I Thessalonians 4:3,4*); that it is a progressive work (*Philippians 1:6; Proverbs 4:18*); that it is begun in regeneration (*I John 2:29*), and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers throughout their earthly life by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in the continual use of the appointed means, especially the Word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer (*Philippians 2:12-13*).

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

We believe that the Holy Spirit in His sovereignty bestows a spiritual gift upon believers at salvation for the purpose of service within the church (*Romans 12; I Corinthians 12:4-11; I Peter 4:10*). Some of the miraculous gifts such as tongues, healings, knowledge, etc., were temporary gifts, intended only to authenticate God's messengers in the apostolic age (*II Corinthians 12:12; Heb. 2:2-4*). By the very nature of their purpose, these gifts have ceased. Thus, the modern charismatic movement has no biblical purpose or basis as a work of the Holy Spirit in the present day (*Acts 2:8; I Corinthians 12:13, 30, 13:8; Ephesians 5:18ff*).

THE SECURITY OF THE BELIEVERS

We believe that every person, immediately upon experiencing regeneration in Jesus Christ, receives the gift of eternal life, the indwelling presence and sealing of the Holy Spirit, and is made at once a child of God; as such, the believer is kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation (*John 10:28-30; Romans 8:28-29, 35-39; Ephesians 1:13-14; Philippians 1:6; I Peter 1:5; I John 5:10-13*).

CONCERNING A GOSPEL CHURCH

We believe that a local church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, with a common faith and fellowship in the gospel (*Acts 2:41-42*); observing the ordinances of Christ (*I Corinthians 11:2*); governed by His laws (*Matthew 28:20*); and exercising the gifts and privileges as directed by His Word (*Ephesians 4:7*); seeking to proclaim the gospel to the ends of the earth (*Matthew 28:20*); that its only Scriptural officers are pastors (bishops, elders) and deacons (*Philippians 1:1*).

THE ORDINANCES

We believe that there are two New Testament church ordinances: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in Christ in water (*Acts 8:36-39; John 3:23*) in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (*Matthew 28:19*); to show forth in solemn and beautiful emblem our identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection (*Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12*); that it is a pre-requisite to the privileges of a church relation (*Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42*); that it, in no way, affects the soul's salvation.

We believe that the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, as instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ, is to be observed by believers of this age as a memorial of Christ's death and a looking forward to His promised return; that it should always be preceded by careful self-examination (*Matthew 26:26-29; I Corinthians 11:23-24*).

CONCERNING CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

We believe that in Jesus Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (*Colossians 2:2-3*). All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage, and our children are to be educated with the Christian philosophy of life in order to meet the standards of God's Word (*Deuteronomy 4:1, 5, 9, 14*).

CONCERNING THE RESURRECTION

We believe the Scriptures clearly teach that Jesus bodily rose from the dead; His grave was emptied of its contents (*Matthew 28:1-8*); that He appeared to the disciples after His resurrection in many convincing manifestations (*Matthew 28:9*); that He now exists in His glorified body at God's right hand (*I Peter 3:22*); and that there will be a resurrection of the righteous and a resurrection of the wicked, separated in time, and that the bodies of the righteous will conform to the glorious spiritual body of the Lord Jesus Christ (*Philippians 3:21*).

CONCERNING THE RETURN OF THE LORD

We believe that the end of the age is approaching (*I Peter 4:7*); that Jesus will come for His saints (*I Thessalonians 4:13-18*); that the Tribulation and the Millennium will follow (*I Thessalonians 5:1-9; II Thessalonians 2; Revelation 3:10; 20:5-7*); that the wicked will be judged and sentenced to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven and hell on principles of righteousness (*Matthew 25:31-46*).

THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked (*Malachi 3:18; Romans 6:17-18; I Peter 4:18*); that only those, who through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in His sight (*Acts 10:34-35; Romans 1:17ff; I John 2:29*); while all those who continue in unbelief and rejection of Christ are, in God's sight, wicked and under the curse (*Romans 6:23, 7:6; Galatians 3:10*) and this distinction holds among men, both in life and after death, in the everlasting blessedness of the saved and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost (*Proverbs 14:32; Matthew 7:13-14, 25:34-41; e.g. Luke 16:25*).

CONCERNING CIVIL GOVERNMENT AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interests and good order of human society and can charge taxes (*Romans 13:1-7*); and that governing officials, are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed (*Matthew 22:21*); except as explicitly defined by the Word of God (*Acts 5:29*); and that the church and state should be separated, the state owing the protection and full freedom (*1 Timothy 2:2*); no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be preferred above another by the state (*James 4:12*).

CONCERNING THE FAMILY

We believe that God Himself established the family as the basic building block of human society from the beginning and for all time (*Genesis 2:22-24; Matthew 19:4-6; Hebrews 13:4*). Spiritually healthy families are critical for a functional local church and a functional society. The Bible defines the family as one man and one woman, together in a marriage union until the separation of physical death (*Matthew 22:30; 1 Corinthians 7:1-4*). Children are a blessing from God and biblical parenting must be a priority for all adults entrusted with children (*Psalms 127:3-5; Ephesians 6:1-4; 1 Timothy 3:4*). Any departure from a biblical view of marriage, the family or parenting removes man from the sphere of God's blessing (*Matthew 19:3-9; Romans 1:18*).

ARTICLE III - Doctrinal Agreement

Members of Northland Bible Baptist Church shall be in full agreement with the doctrinal position of the church, without mental reservation.

ARTICLE IV - Purpose

The purpose of the local church is for equipping the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the saints (*Ephesians 4:12*)

ARTICLE V - Membership

Membership of this church shall be comprised of born-again, baptized believers, who recognize the importance of accountability and commitment. Any who have experienced the new birth through personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior; received the ordinance of water baptism (immersion); agreed to the Constitution of this church; and expressed willingness to strive for holy living, based entirely on God's Word; may be added to the membership upon recommendation from Church leadership. We encourage members who leave this community and church to join another Bible-believing church, as soon as possible.

ARTICLE VI – Authority

This constitution is subject to the absolute authority of the Holy Scriptures.

August 11, 2016