

**Constitution**  
**of**  
**ELIM BAPTIST CHURCH**  
**Minneapolis, Minnesota**

**ARTICLE I**  
**NAME**

The name of this organization shall be Elim Baptist Church of Minneapolis, Minnesota, incorporated as Elim Swedish Baptist Church, also known as Elim Church.

**ARTICLE II**  
**STATEMENT OF FAITH**

We believe that the Bible is God's Word, written by divinely inspired persons, and that in all matters of faith and conduct it is the supreme authority.

We believe in the perfect holiness and justice, infinite wisdom and measureless power of God the Father. We believe that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of mankind, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all those who come to Him through Jesus Christ.

We believe in Jesus Christ, as God's only begotten Son, who was born of the Virgin Mary, and who was sinless in His life. We believe that by His death He made atonement for the sins of the whole world. We believe that He arose from the dead, and that He ascended into heaven, that He is now interceding for His people, and that He will personally return to receive His own.

We believe in the person and work of the Holy Spirit, who came to "convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment," and to regenerate, sanctify, and comfort those who believe in Jesus Christ.

We believe that all people by nature and by choice are sinners, and that God sent His Son to save them from sin.

We believe that the true church, the body of Christ, of which He is the Head, is composed of regenerated believers. We believe that the basis for membership in the local church is the individual's personal acceptance of Jesus Christ by faith and baptism by immersion. We believe that the local church is the organized working force of Christ, united for worship, education, fellowship and care, mission, and stewardship. We believe that to the visible church we are committed for administration and perpetual observance of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper, as well as the task of winning the lost for God.

We believe in the individual's competency to commune with God and that the only mediator is Jesus Christ. We believe in the separation of church and state, and in full religious liberty.

### **ARTICLE III** **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Church shall be:

- A. To preach the Gospel;
- B. To administer the ordinances of the New Testament;
- C. To foster the spiritual growth of its members;
- D. To make its Christian influence felt in the community; and
- E. To evangelize the world by winning men, women, and children to a living faith in Jesus Christ.

### **ARTICLE IV** **MEMBERSHIP**

#### A. Admission

Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, giving evidence of regeneration, and adopting the views of faith and practice set forth in our Statement of Faith, may, by a vote of a ministry team, be received into the membership of the Church in one of the following ways:

- 1. By Baptism - Upon baptism by immersion;
- 2. By Letter - Upon receipt of a letter of transfer duly granted by a Baptist Church; or
- 3. By Experience - A person, not a member of a Baptist Church, but having been baptized by immersion, after profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, may be received upon testimony of his/her experience.

An applicant for admission to the membership of the Church, having consulted with a pastoral staff member, shall be interviewed by a ministry team. An announcement of the intent to join shall be published to the congregation through a regular publication for the opportunity for members to respond to the recommendation. Upon recommendation of that ministry team, they shall be voted into membership by the Leadership Team and subsequently welcomed into membership at any worship service.

#### B. Dismissal

Any member may be dismissed from the membership in one of the following ways;

- 1. By Letter - A member, upon application, may be granted a letter of transfer to any other Baptist Church;

2. By Recommendation - A member, upon application, may be granted a letter of dismissal or a letter of recommendation to any Christian Church of another denomination;
3. By Request - A member, upon request, may be dismissed from the membership. All requests for dismissal from Church Membership shall be considered by the Leadership Team; or
4. By Dismissal for Cause - A member, delinquent by virtue of departure in faith or lack of commitment to, or participation in, the ministry of the Church may be dismissed from the membership. A member being considered for dismissal for cause shall be given opportunity to appear before the Leadership Team in his/her own behalf. The member may be dismissed from the Church by a unanimous vote of the Leadership Team.

#### C. Obligation of Members

Members are expected to whole-heartedly (heart, soul, strength, and mind - Luke 10:27) support the mission and purpose of Elim Baptist Church.

#### D. Privileges of Members

Members of Elim Baptist Church have full voting rights at all business meetings and are eligible to serve as Officers of the Church, members of the Leadership Team and Nominating Committee.

### **ARTICLE V** **PASTORAL STAFF**

The pastoral staff shall perform the scriptural duties of the office and, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, have freedom in the pulpit. They shall also perform other such duties as shall be delegated to and accepted by them. They may be ex-officio members of any ministry team, committee or organization of the Church as designated by the Senior Pastor.

### **ARTICLE VI** **ELECTED OFFICERS**

#### A. All Church Officers shall be members of the Church.

1. Chairperson - The Chairperson shall be the administrative head of the Church and the chairperson of the Leadership Team. He/she shall preside at business meetings and may be an ex-officio member of any ministry team, committee, or organization of the Church.
2. Vice-Chairperson - The Vice-Chairperson shall assume the duties of the Chairperson when absent. He/she may be an ex-officio member of any ministry team, committee, or organization of the Church as designated by the Leadership Team.
3. Secretary and Assistant Secretary

- a. Secretary - The Secretary shall keep minutes of all business meetings of the Church.
- b. Assistant Secretary - The Assistant Secretary shall assist the Secretary in the performance of designated duties. He/she shall conduct all membership related correspondence in the name of the Church and shall maintain the membership records of the Church.
4. Financial Secretaries - The financial secretaries shall keep a record of individual contributions and shall send the contributors periodic statements of contributions made.
5. Treasurer - The Treasurer shall serve as the Chief Financial Officer of the Church. He/she shall be responsible for handling and disbursement of funds in accord with generally accepted accounting principles. The Treasurer shall keep an accurate account of all monies deposited in the bank. He/she shall pay all approved obligations of the Church and shall make detailed reports of the financial transactions of the Church at each regular business meeting and at the annual meeting of the Church. He/she may be requested to attend the Leadership Team meetings at the discretion of the Church Chairperson.
6. Assistant Treasurer - The primary function of the Assistant Treasurer is to handle the payroll and shall be accountable to the Treasurer.

#### B. Procedure of Election

1. A Nominating Committee shall present the slate of nominees for the Officers of the Church~ the Leadership Team~ and the Nominating Committee for the next year.
2. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.
3. Elections shall be by ballot~ and the nominee receiving the greatest number of votes for an office shall be elected to that position.
4. Absentee voting shall not be permitted.
5. The notice of the annual meeting shall meet all legal requirements as set forth in this Constitution.

#### C. Term of Office

The term of office for elected Officers shall be from May 1 through April 30. Members of the Leadership Team shall be elected for a term of three years with approximately one-third of the members being elected each year. Members of the Nominating Committee shall be elected for a term of one year.

#### D. Re-Election

Officers of the Church and members of the Leadership Team shall not serve in the same capacity more than six consecutive years, except that a person may serve two full consecutive terms after having served a partial term. A person may be elected to the same office again after a lapse of one year.

#### E. Vacancies

A vacancy in any office or Leadership Team position shall be filled for the unexpired term by vote of the Church. The Nominating Committee shall present nominations to the Church for such elections.

## **ARTICLE VII** **LEADERSHIP TEAM**

The Leadership Team shall be responsible for the spiritual direction of Elim Baptist Church and shall have authority to manage the business affairs of Elim Baptist Church. The Leadership Team shall be leaders of the congregation in life, thought, and ministry. All Leadership Team members shall be members of the Church. The Leadership Team shall be comprised of no more than ten members including the Senior Pastor, Church Chairperson, Church Vice Chairperson, five members elected from the congregation at large, and other pastoral staff as requested by the Leadership Team. Specific duties of the Leadership Team shall include:

- A. Annually review and prayerfully establish the spiritual direction of the Church.
- B. Prayerfully review and evaluate the total program of the Church to discern where God is leading and take appropriate action.
- C. Annually review and approve the charter and objectives of current ministry teams. Review and approve the charters of new ministry teams. Approve ministry team leaders. Assign ex-officio responsibilities between pastors or Leadership Team members for each ministry team.
- D. Be available for communication with individuals in the congregation.
- E. Act on recommended membership status changes when presented by the designated ministry team.
- F. Make recommendations on all matters to be brought before the congregation, other than from special committees directly responsible to the congregation.
- G. Call Church meetings.
- H. Represent the congregation in certain staff relationships including:
  - 1. Approval of hiring and dismissal of all staff except Senior Pastor;
  - 2. Establishment of all staff personnel policies and administration of those policies, approval of job descriptions for new staff positions, and maintenance of current job descriptions for all staff members;
  - 3. Completion of an annual review of the ministry of the Senior Pastor and the ministry of the other staff, and provide godly counsel; and
  - 4. Annual review and approval of staff compensation, approval of compensation for new staff, and approval of other personnel expenses for any staff member or activity.
- I. Recommend ordinations and licensing to the congregation.
- J. Appoint auditors, individuals who are not directly responsible for financial operation of the Church, to conduct an annual audit of the books of the Church and present a report to the Church at the annual meeting.
- K. Present an annual budget to the Church at the annual meeting. Seeking God's direction, work with the staff and ministry teams to develop the budget.
- L. Be responsible for the creation and administration of all special funds and fund drives.

M. Provide that the Church is adequately represented in all legal matters.

N. Sign legal contracts consistent with the budget, constitution, congregational approval, and state law. This includes authority to borrow money, and to acquire, encumber, and sell real and personal property consistent with the provisions of Article XV of this constitution.

O. Buy, lease, acquire, own, hold, improve, use and deal in any interest in real or personal property; to sell, convey, mortgage, create a security interest in, exchange, or dispose of any interest in real or personal property. However, any action involving the construction of, financing of, or addition to the Church facilities must be approved by the congregation at a business meeting called for such purpose, and any sale, lease, transfer, or disposition of all or substantially of all of the Church property and assets shall likewise be approved by the congregation at a business meeting called for such purpose.

P. Maintain permanent, typed minutes of their meetings.

## **ARTICLE VIII** **MINISTRY TEAMS**

Ministry teams shall be formed as required to accomplish the ministries of Elim Baptist Church. Ministry teams shall be chartered by the Leadership Team to implement specific ministries. The charter for a ministry team shall include:

- A. Statement of purpose;
- B. Ministry strategies;
- C. Leadership structure; and
- D. Qualifications for ministry.

Each ministry team shall present its charter to the Leadership Team for annual review. The list of ministry teams shall be determined annually by the Leadership Team, upon recommendation of the Church staff, in accord with Elim Baptist Church's purpose, strategies, objectives, and as dictated by organizational and functional effectiveness. Each ministry team shall normally have at least one pastor or Leadership Team member as an ex-officio member.

Prayerfully seeking God's direction, each ministry team shall:

- A. Develop and review annually its charter for submission to the Leadership Team;
- B. Accomplish the ministries of its charter;
- C. Recruit and train ministry personnel;
- D. Define and provide the necessary materials required for ministry;
- E. Submit annually to the Leadership Team proposed budgets and objectives for the forthcoming year; and
- F. Meet as required to plan and execute specific ministry objectives.

**ARTICLE IX**  
**NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

The Nominating Committee is responsible for preparing the slate of spiritually maturing nominees for Officers and the Leadership Team.

The Nominating Committee consists of seven members elected at large from a slate of twelve nominees provided by the outgoing Nominating Committee. All nominees must be members of the Church. No members of the Leadership Team shall be members of the Nominating Committee. Nominating Committee membership is for a one-year term limited to one term consecutively. The duties of the Nominating Committee shall be to:

- A. Prepare a slate of Officers of the Church and Leadership Team members at large, and present it at the annual meeting, nominating one person for each position to be filled;
- B. Nominate persons to fill vacancies at such times as they may occur during the year; and
- C. Seek input from the pastoral staff.

**ARTICLE X**  
**FISCAL YEAR**

The fiscal year of the Church shall be from April 1 through March 31.

**ARTICLE XI**  
**WORSHIP AND ORDINANCES**

A. Public Worship

The Church shall meet regularly for public worship.

B. Observance of Ordinances

1. The Ordinance of the Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is open to all believers in Christ and shall be regularly observed.

2. The Ordinance of Baptism

The ordinance of Baptism shall be observed as necessary.

## **ARTICLE XII**

### **SENIOR PASTOR RELATIONS**

#### A. Establishment of Relationship

The pastor shall be called by the affirmative vote of three-fourths of the membership present at a business meeting, announcement of which shall be given by printed notice to all members at least one week prior to such meeting. The voting shall be by closed ballot.

#### B. Dissolution of Relationship

The question of dissolving the pastoral relationship shall be considered by the Church at any meeting:

1. On the presentation of the Pastor's resignation; or
2. By a petition signed by at least five percent of the membership. The pastoral relationship shall be dissolved by a closed ballot vote of three-fourths of the membership present, provided at least 20 percent of the total membership is present at the business meeting. The notice and purpose of the meeting shall be given to members in writing at least one week before the business meeting.

#### C. Election of a Search Committee

1. The Church shall elect a search committee of seven members at a business meeting held within ninety days after a vacancy occurs in the pastorate. All search committee members shall be members of the Church.
2. Notice of this election shall be given to the membership in writing at least one week prior to the business meeting.
3. Nominations shall be from the floor, in writing and unlimited in number.
4. Voting shall be by closed ballot.
5. Vacancies on the committee shall be filled by election at a business meeting of the Church. Nominations shall be from the floor.

#### D. Recommendation

The recommendation of the search committee shall be presented to the Church at a business meeting, notice of which shall have been given to the membership in writing at least one week prior to the meeting. Only one candidate shall be recommended at one time. No other candidate shall be presented until the Church has voted on the recommendation.

#### E. Terms of the Call

The search committee shall recommend the terms of the call to the congregation, following approval by the Leadership Team.



**ARTICLE XIII**  
**AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS**

A. Approval

All organizations to be affiliated with Elim Baptist Church must secure approval for organization from the Leadership Team and must be responsible to the Leadership Team and Elim Baptist Church.

B. Officers

The Officers of an organization of the Church shall be approved by the Leadership Team.

C. Dissolution

If, for any reason, an organization ceases to function, all monies and properties of such organization shall become the property of the Church.

**ARTICLE XIV**  
**AFFILIATIONS**

This Church shall be affiliated with the Minnesota Baptist Conference and with the Baptist General Conference.

**ARTICLE XV**  
**DISPOSITION OF CHURCH PROPERTY**

A. Division

In the event of division of the Church membership, the Church property shall belong to those members who abide by this constitution. In the event of question as to which group is abiding by the constitution, the matter shall be presented to the Board of Stewards of the Minnesota Baptist Conference for a decision. Their decision shall be binding and final.

B. Dissolution

Should conditions arise so the Church work cannot continue, the Church property shall be transferred to the Minnesota Baptist Conference.

**ARTICLE XVI**  
**BUSINESS MEETINGS**

A. Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Church shall be held in the month following the close of the fiscal year.

B. Business Meetings

Quarterly business meetings of the Church shall be held as necessary by order of the Church Chairperson or Leadership Team. A financial statement shall be made available to the congregation on a quarterly basis.

C. Special Business Meetings

Special business meetings of the Church may be held at any time by order of the Church Chairperson or by the petition of ten percent of the membership.

D. Quorum

Five percent of the membership shall constitute a quorum at any regular business meeting of the Church. The Leadership Team shall use a simple majority of its members as a quorum to conduct Church business.

E. Notice

Notice of business meetings shall be given at a public service at least one week before the meeting.

F. Rules of Order

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, shall govern procedure at all business meetings.

**ARTICLE XVII**  
**AMENDMENTS**

A. Proposed amendments to this constitution shall be introduced through formal motion at any business meeting and shall not be acted upon until the annual meeting. Introduction of proposed amendments must precede action by at least ninety days.

B. A printed notice of the proposed amendment shall be available to all members prior to the annual meeting. Printed notice shall be available at regularly scheduled worship services or delivered upon request.

C. The adoption of an amendment shall require a three-fourths majority of votes cast by closed ballot.

**ARTICLE XVIII**  
**ORDAINING AND LICENSING**

A. Ordination

It shall be the privilege of this Church to ordain a member to the gospel ministry. Ordination shall be granted by vote of the Church upon recommendation of the Leadership Team and shall follow the recognized procedure of the Baptist General Conference on examination and ordination.

B. Licensing

Members of this Church, upon a vote of the Church, at the recommendation of the Leadership Team, may be granted a license to preach.

<b>REVISION DATE</b>	<b>REVISION DESCRIPTION</b>
April 28, 2002	Major revision to restructure the organization of the church