

**THE CONSTITUTION OF THE  
CHILSON HILLS BAPTIST CHURCH  
BRIGHTON, MICHIGAN  
January 2006**

**ARTICLE I**

**NAME**

This Church shall be known as the Chilson Hills Baptist Church.

**ARTICLE II**

**PURPOSE**

**Section 1**

We will be a Church that praises God, provides Christian education and communicates the Gospel of Jesus Christ in our homes, our community and throughout the world. We will be a Church that demonstrates the love of Christ in the worship of God and through our commitment to love, support, encourage, share in joys and sorrows, and pray for one another as the Holy Spirit leads us.

**Section 2**

To acquire and own such lands, buildings and property as are needful to do its work as a Church.

**ARTICLE III**

**DENOMINATION AFFILIATIONS**

This Church's government is vested in the body, which composes its membership, but it recognizes its obligation and privilege to cooperate and be affiliated with the Southeastern Area of the American Baptist Churches of Michigan and the American Baptist Churches of the United States of America. A unanimous vote of the active resident voting members is needed to remove the Church from the American Baptist Churches of Michigan and the American Baptist Churches of the United States of America.

**ARTICLE IV**

**DOCTRINE**

This Church receives the Holy Scriptures as its authority in matters of faith and practice.

**ARTICLE V**

**CHURCH COVENANT**

Having been led by the Spirit of God to profess our faith in Jesus Christ, and having been baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, we do now solemnly and joyfully affirm our covenant with God and with each other.

We pledge to serve Christ in the fellowship of this Congregation. We shall endeavor to love one another in prayer, to share in each other's joys, and to sustain each other in times of distress. We aspire to be a fellowship of the concerned, where the lost may find Jesus Christ, sinners may find pardon, seekers may

find meaning for their lives, and where all who come may find welcome. We shall strive to be responsible Church members through faithful attendance, study and giving.

We shall be obedient to Christ in our daily living, using the Holy Scriptures as our guide. Within our homes, in our labor and while at leisure, we shall strive for attitudes and actions which will reflect God's Spirit working through us. We further resolve to accept our responsibilities as Christian citizens. Believing that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, we shall endeavor to avoid experiences and habits, which defile the body and hinder our witness.

Believing that our call to membership in the Church is a call to witness in the world, we dedicate ourselves anew as servants of the Lord of all life. As we pledge our support to the work of our missionaries throughout the world, we commit ourselves to the mission to which God calls us.

Acknowledging our human frailties and ever seeking forgiveness and uplifting, we profess our need of the Holy Spirit, and commit our lives to Jesus Christ and through Him to the care, the judgment, the deliverance, and the mercy of Almighty God. Amen.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **LIFEGROUPS**

We as a Church are committed to the establishment and growth of small group ministries hereafter to be known as Lifegroups. Lifegroups provide a means of finding and growing into a life changing relationship with God thru Jesus Christ and an avenue of ministry for all who desire it. Each Lifegroup is responsible to the Pastor through it's Assistant to the Pastor for Lifegroups. These groups shall be open to both members and non-members of Chilson Hills Church. Lifegroup leaders must be a member of the Church and undergo prescribed Lifegroup leadership training.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **MEMBERSHIP**

Such persons as are in accord with the faith and practices of this Church may be received into membership by any of the below-stated methods, subject to (1) counseling with the Pastor, (2) by vote of the Church and (3) acceptance of the "Right Hand of Fellowship."

- A. By baptism - Any person, who confesses Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and adopts substantially the views of faith and principles of this Church and is baptized by immersion, may be received into the Fellowship of this Church, subject to the receipt of some formalized Church membership instruction.
- B. By letter - Immersed believers who present letters of dismissal and recommendation from another Baptist Church or Church of like faith and practice and who are in substantial accord with the views of faith and principles of this Church may be received by letter from that Church.
- C. By Christian experience - Any believer may be received upon a satisfactory statement of Christian faith and experience, subject to the receipt of some formalized Church membership instruction.

## **Section 2 - Duties of Members**

It shall be the duty of members to familiarize themselves with the Church Covenant; to endeavor with all eagerness to practice the same; to attend habitually the services of this Church; to contribute regularly and generously to the support of its general program, including current expenses and benevolence; to participate in the organized work of the Church, both in time and effort.

## **Section 3 Conflict Resolution between members**

If at any time a Church member has been hurt by another Church member, the person hurt shall first seek to meet alone with the offending member in an attempt to work out the problem.

If there is no resolution or if the party feels unsafe, an attempt should be made by the offended member, with one or two other members in attendance as witnesses.

If no solution can be found, both parties will be notified that discussion of the problem will occur with the Deaconate of the Church. If there is no resolution, and upon the recommendation of the Deaconate to the Executive Ministry Team, the problem will be brought to the Church for discussion.

If there is no resolution and/or repentance, at a called Business Meeting of the Church, the Congregation will vote, with great sadness, as to how best resolve this conflict according to the principles of Matthew 18:15-17

## **Section 4 - Inactivity**

Any member who has not participated in a worship service and/or has not financially contributed for a period of one (1) year shall be notified by letter and a personal visit, if possible, before he/she is placed on an inactive list. Inactive members shall have no voting privileges. Once a person becomes inactive, he/she must attend four (4) Sunday Worship Services within a sixty (60) day period to be reinstated as an active member.

## **Section 5 - Removal of Members**

### **A. By death**

**B. By letter** - Any member in good standing who desires a letter of dismissal and recommendation to another Church may receive it upon request of the Church and upon action by the Church Clerk and being affirmed by the Executive Ministry Team. The name of the Church for which membership is requested shall be stated in the request and the letter shall be sent to the Pastor or Clerk of that Church.

**C. By written request** - A member may have their name erased from the Church Roll by written personal request to the Church Clerk with the affirmation of the Executive Ministry Team.

**D. By Disciplinary Action** - Let it be duly noted that the following procedure may be stopped at any point as the Pastor and Moderator, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, see fit to do so.

If at any time a Church member feels that another Church member is bringing shame or disgrace on Jesus Christ or the Church, he/she shall present this member's name to the Pastor. The Pastor will assess the situation and determine whether a visit is necessary to the named member in relation to this problem

If there is no repentance, the person will be notified that discussion of the problem will occur with the Deaconate of the Church. If there is no resolution, then upon the recommendation of the Deaconate to the Executive Ministry Team, the problem will be brought to the Church for discussion.

If there is no repentance, at a called Business Meeting of the Church, the Congregation will vote, with great sadness, whether or not to expel this person according to the principles of 1 Corinthians 5:2.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **PASTORATE**

#### **Section 1 - Call of the Pastor**

The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period by the Church membership upon recommendation of the Pulpit Committee. The Pastor must be licensed and ordained according to the American Baptist Churches of the United States of America requirements. The Pastor's election shall be by ballot at a regular or special meeting of the Church provided written notice of intention to vote on the calling of a Pastor at such meeting has been given at Church meetings and by letter during the two (2) preceding weeks. Three-fourths (3/4) of all votes cast shall be necessary for an election.

#### **Section 2 - Termination of the Pastor**

- A. Pastoral termination shall be by ballot at a regular or special meeting of the Church provided oral and written notice of intention to vote on the termination of the Pastor has been issued two (2) weeks in advance. Two-thirds (2/3) of all votes cast is needed for termination.
  
- B. The pastoral relation may be terminated upon sixty- (60) days notice from either the Pastor or the Church or without any term of notice by mutual agreement.

#### **Section 3 - Duties of the Pastor**

The Pastor shall preach the Gospel, administer to the ordinances, watch over the membership, promote the spiritual interest of the Church, and organize and develop its strength for the best possible service. The Pastor shall be an ex officio member of all teams and shall be the head of the staff of the Church, as defined by the Executive Ministry Team.

#### **Section 4 - Pulpit Committee**

When the Executive Ministry Team shall deem it necessary it shall recommend to the Church for approval, a chairperson and six additional persons to form a Pulpit Committee. The Pulpit Committee should consist of one member of each of the following: The Deaconate, Children's Ministry Team, Youth Ministry Team, Executive Ministry Team, a youth representative of voting age (16 years), and a Member at Large. It shall be the duty of this Committee to secure and recommend to the Church a desirable candidate for the pulpit. The Pulpit Committee, in response to clear biblical teaching must consider candidates with no preference to gender, race, or ethnic background. The Church shall give no consideration to any candidate who is not first recommended to the Church by the Pulpit Committee.

#### **Section. 5 –Associate Pastors**

Associates to the Pastor shall be recommended by the Pastor, appointed by the Executive Ministry Team and affirmed by the congregation. Responsibilities include but are not limited to hospital and home visitation, counseling, weddings, and other pastoral duties as needed.

#### **Section. 6- Assistants to the Pastor**

Assistants to the Pastor for specific areas of ministry shall be appointed by the Pastor and affirmed by the congregation. Specific ministries include but are not limited to Lifegroups and Youth. Assistants to the Pastor shall oversee the work of their specific ministries on behalf of the Pastor. They will be under the direction of and responsible to the Pastor.

### **Section 7 – Church Administrator**

The office of Church Administrator shall be a fulltime paid position to provide the ministry of administrative support to the Pastor and Church and be accountable to the Pastor and the Executive Ministry Team. The Church Administrator shall work with all ministry teams of the Church to assure a well-run organization.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **CHURCH OFFICERS**

The following Church Officers shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the Church to serve for a renewable term of one (1) year. No Officer shall hold more than one elected office and must be a member of this Church.

#### **Section 1 - Moderator**

The Moderator shall preside over the Executive Ministry Team and at all business meetings of the Church. The Moderator shall be familiar with and conduct said meetings according to Roberts Rules of Order. In the event the Moderator is unable to be present at any Church meeting, the Vice Moderator shall preside. The Moderator shall be responsible for appointing special teams as needed and shall have the authority to call any Ministry Team meeting that is deemed necessary. The Moderator shall be the spokesperson for the Church in matters pertaining to general business and organization. The Moderator shall be an ex officio member of all teams with the exception of the Pulpit Committee.

#### **Section 2 - Vice Moderator**

The Vice Moderator shall assist the Moderator when the Moderator is unable to fulfill his/her duties on a temporary basis, i.e., preside over the Executive Ministry Team and at all business meetings of the Church. The office of Vice Moderator is not intended to permanently replace the Moderator. The Vice Moderator shall be the leader of the Nominating Ministry Team.

#### **Section 3 - Clerk**

The Clerk shall keep a complete record of the business transactions at all special and annual meetings of the Church, and of the transactions of business meetings of the Executive Ministry Team, and shall carry on such general correspondence as required. The Clerk shall maintain a current and complete roll of the members of the Church and their addresses and shall issue letters of dismissal when authorized by the Church. The Clerk shall maintain a file of all communications, written reports and documents pertaining to the office of Clerk and deliver such records to the successor Clerk.

#### **Section 4 Treasurer**

The Church Treasurer shall have custody of all moneys contributed in the name of the Church and shall pay all bills when authorized by the Budget or the Executive Ministry Team. The payment of bills shall be by check, signed by any one of the following Officers: Treasurer, Church Administrator or the Assistant to the Treasurer at the Treasurers request.

The Treasurer shall make annual reports to the Church and designated monthly reports when requested by the various teams of the Church and shall present the books of the office for audit at the close of the year and at other times as requested by the Executive Ministry Team. The Treasurer shall deliver immediately to the successor Treasurer all books and records pertaining to the office of Treasurer. The Church shall bond the Treasurer.

#### **Section 5 - Assistant to the Treasurer**

The Assistant to the Treasurer shall be trained by the Treasurer to perform all of the duties of the Treasurer. The Assistant to the Treasurer shall be responsible to fulfill all duties of the Treasurer if the Treasurer is unable to perform those duties. The Assistant to the Treasurer shall be able to sign Church

checks and vote at Executive Ministry Team meetings when requested by the Treasurer to act on the Treasurer's behalf. The Assistant to the Treasurer shall not otherwise be required to attend Executive Ministry Team meetings or have Executive Ministry Team voting privileges. The Church shall bond the Assistant to the Treasurer.

#### **Section 6 - Financial Secretary**

"The Financial Secretary shall receive and oversee the counting of all moneys contributed to the Church through regular and special offerings and shall deposit the amount in the bank designated by the Executive Ministry Team. A duplicate record of the total amount received shall be given to the Treasurer. The Financial Secretary shall furnish envelopes to the members of the Church and other requesters; maintain an accurate, confidential record of individual estimates of giving and other contributions; send quarterly and annual statements to all givers of record. The Financial Secretary shall deliver immediately to the successor Financial Secretary all books and records pertaining to the office of Financial Secretary. The Church shall bond the Financial Secretary.

#### **Section 7 - Assistant to the Financial Secretary**

The Assistant to the Financial Secretary shall be trained by the Financial Secretary to perform all of the duties of the Financial Secretary. The Assistant to the Financial Secretary shall be responsible to fulfill all the duties of the Financial Secretary if the Financial Secretary is unable to perform those duties. The Assistant to the Financial Secretary will not be required to attend Executive Ministry Team meetings unless acting on behalf of the Financial Secretary. At this time only shall the Assistant to the Financial Secretary have Executive Ministry Team voting privileges. The Church shall bond the Assistant to the Financial Secretary.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **Ministry Teams**

The Church affirms, empowers and authorizes each Ministry Team to carry out the ministry to which God has called it

A Ministry Team is a group of two or more individuals using the Church name or its property, approved by and accountable to the Executive Ministry Team, brought together to achieve a mission or to meet appropriate long or short-term goals.

A Ministry Team leader shall be chosen from among the team members. The leader shall preside at all team meetings, be responsible for the teams' action and be its spokesperson. The team leader may call for meetings of the team when deemed necessary. The leader of any team must be a member of this Church. All team leaders are required to regularly report to the Church Administrator. The team leader shall serve for a renewable term of (1) year.

Each Ministry team shall develop a mission statement detailing its specific functions and operational procedures. Subsequent changes to any mission statement shall be immediately submitted to the Executive Ministry Team for review.

A list of Ministry Teams and leaders shall be posted and updated as needed to keep it current. All Ministry Team mission statements shall be available upon request, through the Church office.

## ARTICLE XI

### STANDING MINISTRY TEAMS

The following Standing Ministry Teams shall follow all rules outlined in Article X for Ministry Teams unless otherwise stated.

#### Section 1 - Executive Ministry Team

The Executive Ministry Team shall be composed of the following:

- Pastor
- Moderator – Team Leader
- Vice Moderator
- Church Clerk
- Financial Secretary
- Church Treasurer
- Representative of the Deaconate

“There shall be no less than three (3) or more than six (6) additional persons elected to the Executive Ministry Team from the membership-at-large of the congregation. With the exception of the Pastor, all Executive Team members shall serve for a renewable term of one (1) year.”

The Executive Ministry Team shall oversee the total life of the Church, including worship, education, finances and the physical properties of the Church. The members of the Executive Ministry Team will be accountable to the Congregation of this Church. The Executive Ministry Team shall hold in trust all property belonging to the Church and when authorized by the Church, may buy, sell, mortgage, or lease any or all properties owned by the Chilson Hills Baptist Church.

The Executive Ministry Team shall also be responsible for,

- A. Monitoring all budget and non-budget expenditures
- B. Developing a stewardship education program.
- C. Planning, carrying out and evaluating the annual “Estimate of Giving” campaign.
- D. Receiving from each Ministry Team an annual budget request and a complete annual budget to the Treasurer.
- E. Appointing the Nominating, Auditing and, Constitution and By-Laws Ministry Teams.
- F. Reviewing all team mission statements at least once annually.

In addition, the Executive Ministry Team will be responsible for the oversight of all personnel hired by the Congregation. All matters dealing with said personnel would be discussed in "closed session". These matters will include:

- A. Holding the Pastor and all other personnel accountable for their approved job descriptions.
- B. Approving all staff appointments.
- C. Supporting and under girding the Pastor and church staff.
- D. Conducting an annual salary review of all Church personnel.

It shall designate the bank where the funds of the Church shall be deposited. The Executive Ministry Team shall approve all bills, in excess of budgeted items authorized by the Church, before payment is made.

Two-thirds (2/3) of the members of this Team shall constitute a quorum.

## **Section 2 - Property Management Ministry Team**

The Property Management Ministry Team shall be composed of at least three (3) members of the Congregation. The Property Management Ministry Team shall be responsible to oversee the physical properties of the Church including the building, grounds, and capital inventory items. The PMMT shall be responsible for the usage, maintenance and development of each, and shall take all necessary measures for their protection. To ensure safety and aesthetic standards are maintained, the Property Management Ministry Team shall approve any addition, modification, or alteration of the above-mentioned items. This team, with the assistance of the Church Administrator, shall be responsible for keeping accurate and current records of all funds collected and disbursed in relation to the Memorial Gardens and Columbarium(s). Proper recommendations shall be made to the Executive Team concerning any and all items of this section.

A simple majority of Team members shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting the business of the Property Management Ministry Team

## **Section 3 – Worship Ministry Team**

This team is responsible for the planning and staffing of worship services

## **Section 4 – Children’s Ministry Team**

The mission of this team is to provide a loving, spiritual and safe environment in which children find a sense of purpose, friendship, joy, guidance, knowledge, and blessing as they bond together and grow in their discipleship to Jesus.

**Section 5 - Youth Ministry Team** - The mission of this team is to support, nurture, lead, mentor, pray for, teach and love youth as our ministry in serving God. We want all Youth to learn the walk, walk the talk, and live in the love, knowledge and joy of Jesus!

# **ARTICLE XII**

## **THE DEACONATE**

The Deaconate shall be a group of duly elected persons having met the criteria of election listed below. The Deaconate shall be servants of the Congregation in the loving spirit of Jesus Christ our Lord and shall be accountable to this Congregation.

### **Section 1 - Purpose**

The purpose of the Deaconate is, loving service actively rendered to the glory of God and the upbuilding of the Body of Christ.

### **Section 2 - Requirements**

The Deaconate candidate will meet certain requirements, which are stipulated by the Scripture and the Congregation. These requirements include:

- A. Being a person who receives Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord
- B. Being a person whose life is a positive testimony to Christ, manifesting the Spirit’s presence in word and deed
- C. Being an active member in good standing of the Church
- D. Being a person committed to a life of learning.
- E. Being a person willing to commit to the active service of Jesus Christ
- F. Being a person who is respected in home, Church and community

After the completion of a course of study prescribed by the Pastor and with the recommendation of the Pastor, the Members of the Executive Ministry Team shall then interview the Deaconate candidate. Upon the recommendation of the Executive Ministry Team, the Deaconate candidate shall be presented to the

Congregation for a final interview and vote. Upon election by three fourths (3/4) of all votes cast, the person will be ordained a Deacon of the Chilson Hills Baptist Church.

### **Section 3 - Duties**

The duties of the Deaconate will be identified in the individual process of the candidacy. The duties will be identified as ministry areas where the goal is the glorification of God and the building of the Body of Christ. Each Deacon's area of ministry may be different.

### **Section 4 - Conducting Weddings, Funerals, Baptisms and Pulpit supply**

We as a Church recognize that there may be occasions when a member of the Deaconate will be called upon to conduct one or more of these services in the absence of the Pastor. Since these functions are normally reserved for ordained pastors, we hereby authorize the Deaconate of our Church to perform such services when and so long as they perform these services under the direction of our Pastor.

### **Section 5 - Relationship to the Pastor**

The Pastor is elected by the Congregation and called by God to be the overseer of this particular and unique congregation. As such, the Pastor is responsible to God for the overall ministry of this Church.

It is expected that the Pastor will understand this overseer role as being the servant of the servants of the Congregation. Hence, mutual accountability, responsibility and loving respect are expected between the Pastor and the Deaconate.

## **ARTICLE XIII**

### **MEETINGS**

Rules contained in the most current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the business procedures of all Church meetings.

#### **Section 1 - Annual Business Meeting**

The Annual Business Meeting shall be held in November of each year. At this meeting, the agenda of Church business shall include, but not be limited to, the distribution of annual reports of the Pastor and various teams, approval of the annual budget and the election of officers.

#### **Section 2 - Special Meetings of the Church**

Special meetings of the Church may be convened at any time at the call of the Pastor or Moderator, provided that the purpose for the meeting be stated in writing and announced at public meetings of the Church at least two (2) Sundays in advance. Incidental business, other than the appropriation of money, may be transacted at any regular meeting of the Church, at the call of the Pastor or Moderator.

## **ARTICLE XIV**

### **QUORUM**

All elections shall be by plurality vote unless otherwise specified herein. Every active member in good standing of the age of sixteen (16) or over shall have the right to vote. The Church Clerk shall count the number of active resident (non-resident: any one who does not live within the local community) voting members present at any official Church meeting. A quorum shall be established when at least twenty (20%) percent of the active resident voting membership is present. A quorum shall be established before any official business can be transacted.

## **ARTICLE XV**

### **INDEMNIFICATION**

Chilson Hills Baptist Church shall indemnify its minister and any and all officers, Team leaders and/or former officers and Team leaders of the Church and/or any person who may have served at its request as a Team leader or officer, against reasonable expenses, including attorney fees, actual and necessary, incurred by him/her in connection with the defense of any civil, criminal or administrative action, suit or proceeding in which he/she is made a party or with which he/she is threatened by reason of being or having been or because of any act of such minister or officer, within the course of his/her duties or employment, except in relation to matters as to which he/she shall be adjudged in such action, suit or proceeding to be liable for negligence or misconduct in the performance of his/her duties

## **ARTICLE XVI**

### **AMEND CONSTITUTION**

The Constitution Team must present any amendments, revisions or changes to the Constitution or By-laws of the Chilson Hills Baptist Church to the Executive Ministry Team for approval and then to the Congregation in written form. Notification of change must be made in writing and from the pulpit for two (2) consecutive weeks before the actual meeting. A quorum having been established, two thirds (2/3) of all votes cast is needed to amend the Constitution.

### **THE BY-LAWS OF THE CHILSON HILLS BAPTIST CHURCH BRIGHTON, MICHIGAN 48116 January 2001**

1. Whenever mission projects are being considered, American Baptist projects will be given first priority. (6/81)
2. Lead teachers of the Children's Sunday School and lead Youth Advisors shall be members of this Church. (12/03)
3. The Church shall operate under an annual "Estimate of Giving" system with a unified budget. Estimates of Giving may be updated by notifying the Financial Secretary. (1/2001)