

**Clifton Baptist Church**  
**Constitution, Bylaws, Covenant & Statement of Faith**  
**6 Revisions adopted: September 17, 2011; March 15, 2014; July 15, 2015;**  
**January 6, 2017; February 5, 2023; August 20, 2023**

**CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS**  
**CHURCH ORGANIZED NOV. 19, 1838**

**ARTICLE I. NAME**

**This church shall be known as the CLIFTON BAPTIST CHURCH, Clifton, Maine.**

**ARTICLE II. PURPOSE**

**The purpose for which this church is constituted shall be for the maintenance of the public worship of God and promotion of fellowship in the Gospel of our Lord, Master and Savior Jesus Christ.**

**ARTICLE III. CHURCH AUTHORITY**

**This church shall be self-governing, self-supporting, self-propagating, and self-disciplining. Acts 6: 1-6; Mal. 3:8,10; Matt. 28: 18-20; Acts 2:42-47; Gal. 6: 1; Matt. 18 15-17**

**ARTICLE IV. BELIEFS**

**This church holds to the integrity of the Bible as the final rule of faith and practice and shall be known as a New Testament Church, adhering to the fundamental doctrines of Scripture. A copy of our statement of faith is attached to this constitution (appendix A) and is given to all new church members.**

**We believe that "Baptism," and the "Lord's Supper" are ordinances of Christ's Church. That New Testament Baptism is by immersion and for Believer's only. In the administration of the Lord's Supper the invitation to partake will be granted to all believers whose privilege it is to gather around the Lord's Table.**

**ARTICLE V. COVENANT**

**We accept as our church covenant the-printed in the back of our hymnals, attached to our church constitution, and given to all new church members (appendix B).**

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**ARTICLE VI. PLEDGE**

**Having accepted Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and Lord, we believe that the church is His spiritual body, the one institution for which He shed His precious blood. Since He is the head of the church, we solemnly and sincerely promise that we as members of the Clifton Baptist Church of Clifton, Maine heartily cooperate in the church's work. We will contribute faithfully, cheerfully, and regularly to the support of the ministries and expenses of the church and will diligently strive to follow the Lord Jesus Christ.**

**ARTICLE VII. MEMBERSHIP**

**SECTION 1.**

**All candidates for membership should give satisfactory evidence of their profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior, and their baptism by immersion to the Elders and Pastor. They shall be in agreement with this church's statement of faith, constitution, by-laws and be willing to assume the responsibilities of membership. To receive the right-hand of fellowship (become members), each candidate must be recommended by the Board of Elders and the Pastor and receive a two-thirds vote of the church members present during a duly called meeting.**

**One who is a member of any Christ-centered church may transfer by letter and become a member of this church upon complying with the conditions given in the preceding paragraph.**

**Any member in good and regular standing shall be entitled to a letter of transfer from this church to another Christ-centered church.**

**SECTION 2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERSHIP**

**Members should attend religious services and "special meetings" at the church, contribute to the current expenses as their ability allows, and labor for the growth of the church both spiritually and numerically. All church members are to edify each other as to their conduct and behavior within the local assembly and in public.**

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**SECTION 3. DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERSHIP**

**The church reserves the right, through its Elders and Pastor, to oversee its members and exercise discipline, when necessary, in order to maintain its own testimony according to the Scriptures. Mt. 18:15-17; Gal 6:1; Heb. 13:17. In exercising discipline, the Pastor and Elders shall meet with the member to reconcile the situation. If reconciliation is not accomplished, then it shall be brought before the membership. They should do this in Christian love following the instructions given in Mt. 18:15-17.**

**SECTION 4. PURGING THE MEMBERSHIP ROLL**

**A member being absent from all services, not contributing for the support of the Gospel or not showing any interest for a period of 18 months, shall be given notice by personal visitation or letter. If thereafter a period of three months shall pass with no response being made, they shall be removed from the church roll by a vote of the membership.**

**ARTICLE VIII. MEETINGS**

**SECTION 1. ANNUAL MEETINGS**

**The annual business meeting should be held the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in February or at a more convenient time. Notice to be given one month in advance in the church bulletin, from the pulpit, and by electronic means. All members are encouraged to attend. If unable to personally attend, a member may request an electronic invitation for attendance (must be a visual medium) and will be considered present for quorum and voting purposes. It is suggested that there be a church fellowship supper before the annual meeting,**

**A suggested agenda for meetings is as follows:**

- A. Meeting called to order by an Elder/Moderator and opened with prayer**
- B. Select a Moderator (recommended that this be an Elder or Deacon)**
- C. Nominate and select Church Clerk**
- D. The following reports shall be heard and voted on by the church membership**

- 1. Clerk's Report: Previous Clerk will read the minutes of the last annual meeting and the minutes of any meetings from the past year**
- 2. Pastor's Report**
- 3. Elder's Report**
- 4. Treasurer's Report**
- 5. Deacons' Report**
- 6. Nominating Committee Report**

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- E. Selection of the Church Officers, Appointees and Committee Members for the coming year**
- F. Old Business (requiring action)**
- G. New Business**
- H. Adoption of the Budget**
- I. Close the meeting with prayer**

**SECTION 2. WEEKLY MEETINGS**

**The church shall hold regular meetings for public worship, a Bible study for instruction on the Lord's Day and a mid-week evening service for prayer, praise, testimony and Bible Study.**

**SECTION 3. WHO MAY CALL A BUSINESS MEETING**

**The Pastor, Elders, Deacons, or three or more members, upon written request, may call special meetings to vote on, or to consider matters of vital importance. Notice for all meetings should be given at least one week in advance. Church members are encouraged to attend any Board or committee meetings when invited.**

**SECTION 4. QUORAM**

**Five members of legal age shall constitute a quorum, but less than a quorum may adjourn the meeting to a certain date.**

**SECTION 5. Church Usage**

**Church Usage for all meetings and special requests given of the church, shall be reviewed by the Elder Board who will oversee any and all use of the church buildings. We will not allow the church or the standing Pastor to perform same sex marriages. The Elders and Pastor are to approve any marriages within the church. Our facility cannot be used by anyone except those practicing a monogamous relationship between a man and a woman.**

**We affirm that God intends marriage to be a monogamous, life-long, one flesh union of a man and a woman.**

**Mark 10:6-9 “But at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female.' (Mar 10:7) ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, (Mar 10:8) and the two will become one flesh.’ So, they are no longer two, but one flesh. (Mar 10:9) Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”**

**Ephesians 5:31, “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”**

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**The official policy of The American Baptist Churches of Maine**

**a. “We affirm the 1984 ABCUSA General board American Baptist Statement on Family Life that says, in part, ' We affirm that God intends marriage to be a monogamous, life-long, one-flesh union of a woman and a man, who in response to God's call leave father and mother and cleave to one another. We affirm God's blessing and active presence in marriage relationships so entered in response to God's call.”**

**b. “We affirm the 1992 resolution adopted by the General Board of the ABCUSA, which says: 'We affirm that the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching.’”**

**ARTICLE IX. OFFICERS, AND ELECTED OR APPOINTED POSITIONS AND THEIR DUTIES**

**SECTION 1. OFFICERS and REQUIREMENTS TO HOLD OFFICE**

**The officers of this Church should be Pastor, Elders, Deacons. The Annual Elected Positions of the church are, Church Clerk, Treasurer, Christian Education Director, Church Secretary and any other positions or committees as may from time to time be deemed necessary to carry forward the work. All persons holding office shall be elected by the church membership. The appointed positions shall be active members in the church, attending church services and church functions on a regular basis and living according to the Scriptures. In addition to these requirements, persons in the office of Pastor, Elder and Deacon shall adhere to qualifications listed in I Tim. 3: 1-7; Titus 1: 5-9.**

**SECTION 2. PASTOR**

**The Pastor along with the Elders shall be the leader of the church in all its activities. The Pastor shall preach the gospel, administer the ordinances, have charge of the stated public worship services, and direct the spiritual welfare of the church. Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:2-3. The Pastor shall be a member of all boards, committees, and auxiliary organizations of the church.**

**A Pastoral candidate must be recommended by the pulpit committee and Elders. A pastor shall be called upon receiving 95% of the vote of the church membership attending the meeting. A pastor's term of office may be ended upon ninety days' notice on the part of the Pastor or of the Church. A shorter notice may be accepted if mutually agreed upon by the Pastor and board of Elders.**

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**SECTION 3. ELDERS. Eldership Duties are subject to the will of the congregation, elders shall oversee the ministry and resources of the church, devoting their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word and shepherding God's flock. The elders shall take responsibility to examine and recommend candidates for membership and oversee the bi-annual membership survey. They shall recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions, provide guidance in the areas of visioning, planning and budgeting, oversee the work of the deacons and appointed church agents and committees, approve policies and procedures, plan and conduct the church's worship services and meetings, help administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church, equip the membership for the work of the ministry, and mobilize the church for mission. The elders shall protect and care for the membership with biblical peacemaking, conflict resolution, exercising church discipline, providing biblical counseling and prayer for the sick. The elders shall elect a chairman of elders' meetings, as well as appoint a moderator from to preside over each official church meeting. A written report of elder ministry will be provided by the chairman and presented annually to the congregation as part of the annual celebration.**

**Elders shall be elected by the church membership to serve. There shall be three or more Elders as deemed necessary by the congregation, always to be an odd number. Elders shall serve if the congregation and Elder board considers them qualified and remain actively involved in the church. New Elders are to be nominated by the current Elder board. Once a new Elder has been chosen, that candidate will be brought before the congregation for a vote of approval at the annual meeting.**

**Elders shall in every way assist in the work of the pastoral office, including the following:**

**A. Consider with the Pastor all applicants for church membership and all requests for the removal of their membership and make appropriate recommendations to the church membership. Cooperate with the pastor in providing supply ministry and other eldership for Sunday services and other meetings in the pastor's absence.**

**C. Provide for the Lord's Supper and aid in its administration.**

**D. Visit the members and care for sick, needy, and distressed persons of the church or community. Acts 6:1-6**

**E. Share with the treasurer oversight of the financial affairs of the church including trust funds. If any nonbudgeted expenditure requires spending more than \$500, the Elders will present it to the congregation for a discussion and vote.**

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#### **SECTION 4. DEACONS**

**The Board of Deacons shall consist of three members elected by the church membership to serve rotating terms of three years. They are responsible for all church property and shall take all necessary measures for its protection, management, upkeep, and improvement. If any nonbudgeted expenditure requires spending more than \$500, then the Deacons must present the item to the Elders before it is taken to the membership for a discussion and vote.**

#### **SECTION 5. CLERK**

**Annually there shall be elected a Church Clerk. The clerk shall keep true minutes of all business meetings and preserve them in permanent form. Annually, the clerk's records shall be placed in a permanent file at the church after the completion of the Annual Report. All church records shall be kept at the church in a safe place. The Clerk shall keep a correct register of membership with dates and mode of admission and all losses with dates and causes thereof and conduct the general correspondence. The clerk may be allowed to select an assistant when necessary.**

**Whenever the Church's constitution and bylaws are revised, the Clerk will distribute to the membership a copy of the revised**

document. This will be done within thirty (30) days of the meeting at which the revisions were accepted.

#### **SECTION 6. TREASURER**

A treasurer shall be elected annually. The treasurer shall receive and keep accurate account of all money contributed for the support of the Church and of all its expenditures, pay only such bills as are directed by the Board of Elders, shall deposit only in such Banks as the Board of Elders directs, and in the name of the Clifton Baptist Church, Clifton, Maine. The treasurer shall at the annual business meeting present a full report of same for the year, will submit a report to the board at least a week before a board of elders meeting, or a report as often as required. The Treasurer may be required to attend and participate at board meetings.

#### **SECTION 7. PULPIT COMMITTEE**

A pulpit committee is formed when a new pastor needs to be selected. It shall consist of five church members, elected by the congregation including at least one Elder and one Deacon. The committee must present a candidate to the Elder board for approval before presenting the candidate to the members. The committee shall be required to give the congregation regular progress reports during its search.

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#### **SECTION 8. BUDGET COMMITTEE**

Each year in November the Pastor or Elder chair will call for the budget committee to meet and work on the new proposed budget. This committee will consist of the Pastor, Treasurer, Clerk and one Elder, one Deacon, Christian Education Director, and representatives of any other committees the Pastor and Elder Board deems appropriate. The committee will meet as many times as necessary to prepare a budget.

#### **SECTION 9. NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

The Nominating Committee shall consist of at least three members: one member representing the Elders and two other church members.

The Nominating Committee shall prepare a list of names from the membership of the church of those qualified to fill the various positions. It shall interview each nominee proposed and ascertain his or her willingness to serve in case of election. The committee shall have prepared ballots if secret ballots are requested. This committee shall nominate all officers and/or committees not otherwise provided for.



## **SECTION 10. ADVOCATES**

**Advocate for Missions, Evangelism and Christian Education shall be appointed annually by the Board of Elders and shall perform such duties as prescribed to them to promote their areas of responsibility.**

## **ARTICLE X. AMENDMENTS**

**The constitution and by-laws may be amended at any duly called business meeting after posting and announcing any suggested changes at least two Sundays in advance.**

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **Clifton Baptist Church Statement of Faith**

- 1. We believe in one God, eternally existent as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.**
- 2. We believe that the Bible, composed of the Old and New Testaments, is God's inspired and infallible Word, and is the supreme standard and final authority for all conduct, faith, and doctrine.**
- 3. We believe in the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning blood in death, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His promised personal return in power and glory.**
- 4. We believe man was created by God in His image, but by willful transgression became sinful and is justly under condemnation and wrath of Almighty God.**
- 5. We believe that the only salvation from this guilt and condemnation is through faith in the righteousness and atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. Salvation is the gift of God's love and grace brought about only by confession through prayer and a life of faith and service. "For God so loved**

the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life". (John 3:16, NIV).

6. We believe in the personality of the Holy Spirit and that His ministry is to reveal Christ to men, to convict of our sin, to redeem sinners through confession and to sanctify the lives of the transformed believers, by His indwelling presence and power.

7. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ instituted the ordinances of baptism and communion; that baptism by immersion is only to be administered upon profession of faith in Christ, thereby declaring our faith in a crucified, buried and risen Savior; that communion is only for believers, is to be preceded by faithful self-examination, and is in remembrance of the Lord's death until He comes.

8. We believe that a local Church is a body of believers committed to Christ's ordinances, worship, fellowship, serving others, and the spread of the Gospel of God's grace to all the world.

9. We believe that every human being, believer, or unbeliever, is personally responsible to God in all matters

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Church 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 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 the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel throughout all nations.

We also engage to maintain as far as possible family and secret devotion; to teach our children the Christian truths; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealing, faithful in our engagements, exemplary in our

**deportment, and zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.**

**We further engage to watch over one another in Christian love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and 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 the covenant and principles of God's Word.**