

**International Baptist Church of Budapest  
Constitution  
Ratified January 20, 2013**

**I. NAME**

The name of this church shall be the International Baptist Church of Budapest (IBCB).

**II. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this church shall be to bring glory to God by making more and better disciples of Jesus Christ. We purpose to provide worship and fellowship for the English-speaking community of greater Budapest and to proclaim the Gospel to Budapest, to Hungary and to the ends of the earth. As a multicultural fellowship of Christ-followers we purpose to:

- Know Christ through building believers up in their relationship with Him.
- Grow in Christ through equipping workers to be sent out into the field of ministry for Him.
- Show Christ through winning the lost to personal faith and devotion to Him.

Every area of our ministry at IBCB will endeavour to reflect this ideal as we follow the example of Jesus Christ's vision, purpose and practice of ministry: making disciples who make disciples to the glory of God.

**III. STATEMENT OF FAITH**

THE BIBLE: We believe the sixty-six books of the Bible in the original autographs to be the infallible, written Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit, inerrant, and the sole authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

THE TRINITY: We believe in the unity of the Trinity, eternally existing in three Persons - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - each of whom possess equally all the attributes of deity and the characteristics of personality.

THE PERSON OF CHRIST: We believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and became incarnate through the virgin birth, and that in His person He unites forever perfect deity and true humanity.

THE WORK OF CHRIST: We believe that Jesus Christ lived a sinless life, that He was crucified as the substitutionary sacrifice for the sins of all people, that He rose bodily from the dead, that He ascended into heaven where He is now exalted at the right hand of the Father where He intercedes for the believer.

MAN'S CONDITION: We believe that man was originally and directly created in the image of God and that through disobedience fell. Consequently all were brought under divine condemnation and are born sinners, unable to please God in their natural state.

THE HOLY SPIRIT: We believe in the work of the Holy Spirit in the conviction and regeneration of the sinner. We believe that the indwelling presence and ministry of the Holy Spirit in each believer begins at salvation.

SALVATION: We believe that eternal salvation is wholly a work of God's grace and that, upon repentance and personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, sinners are forgiven and divine righteousness is imputed to them.

THE CHURCH: We believe that the Church, the Body of Christ, consists only of those who are born again, having been baptized into Christ by the Holy Spirit at the time of regeneration.

**CHURCH ORDINANCES:** As a church we believe that water baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances to be observed by the Church during the present age. They are, however, not to be regarded as means of salvation.

- The Lord's Supper: We will seek to observe the Lord's Supper monthly. We understand the Lord's Supper to be a proclamation of the atoning work of Jesus Christ and a symbol of our fellowship with God and one another. All who acknowledge Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord are invited to participate.
- Baptism is the symbolic expression of one's personal experience of salvation and new life in Christ. We practice the ordinance of baptism by immersion to those who profess faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord.

**THE SECOND COMING:** We believe that Jesus Christ will return personally, visibly, and bodily to receive His own and to establish His kingdom.

**THE RESURRECTION:** We believe in the bodily resurrection of the believer to eternal life and conscious fellowship with God. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the unbeliever to conscious separation from God in eternal punishment.

#### **IV. AFFILIATION AND STANDING**

The church shall affiliate with the Baptist Union of Hungary and maintain contact with the International Baptist Convention.

#### **V. MEMBERSHIP**

The church shall recognize as members all those who are regularly attending baptized believers who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior being born again, and who manifest the fruit of the Spirit in their lives, and are in agreement with the doctrine and polity of this church.

**Responsibilities:** It is expected that members will:

- 1) Conduct their lives in accordance with the Word of God.
- 2) Help in the work and witness of the church.
- 3) Exercise mutual love in all matters and prevent strife and dissension in the church.
- 4) Give regularly to the ministry and mission of the church through tithing, offerings and alms giving.
- 5) Be faithful in attendance at worship services and regular church meetings.
- 6) Uphold and support church leaders.
- 7) Abide by the Constitution of the church.

**Privileges:** Members may be eligible for the following roles in the church:

- 1) Pastor or elder in the church as prescribed in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.
- 2) Ministry leader in the church.
- 3) Team or committee member as assigned by the elders from time to time for providing program oversight, general direction and guidance, conflict resolution or church discipline as needed.

**Discipline:**

- 1) If any member shall conduct himself/herself in a manner which, in the documented and studied opinion of the elders, is not in harmony with Scriptural principles and for which he/she does not show evidence of true biblical repentance, he/she shall be interviewed and counselled by the elders, as instructed in the Word of God (Matt. 18:15-17; Gal 6:1). The restoration of the member shall be the single purpose of these interviews, with love as the sole motivation.
- 2) If, however, the member should choose to continue in his/her unrepentant condition, the member will be suspended from membership and not be allowed to hold any leadership office or role in the church and will not be allowed to take part in any regular Congregational

Meetings. A suspended member may make a written request to remove the suspension, but the elders shall have the discretion whether or not to remove the suspension. A suspended member is not generally precluded from attending church worship services. However, the elders reserve the right to restrict a suspended member's participation in IBCB services, events and gatherings when circumstances warrant the overall protection of the church body.

## **VI. LEADERSHIP**

**General Provisions:** All those who aspire to leadership within the church as an elder or ministry leader must meet the following candidacy requirements:

- 1) Submission of the Leadership Questionnaire shall be made to the elders.
- 2) All candidates shall attend a leadership class to acquaint themselves with the church's Statement of Faith, Constitution, history and ministry with particular attention given to the church's Statement of Faith.
- 3) All candidates shall meet with at least two elders to give their personal testimony of their salvation through faith in Jesus Christ and to acknowledge their agreement with the Statement of Faith, Constitution, and ministry of the church.
- 4) Upon unanimous approval by the elders, candidates shall be approved for service.
- 5) All requests for leadership will be handled in the manner described above, except for the senior pastor and his wife, or associate staff and their spouses, who will be appointed by the elders and endorsed by the congregation for their respective ministry roles as described below.

**Elders:** Elders shall be baptized men above the age of 21 years who meet the qualifications of an elder as given in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Their number shall not be less than three, one of whom will be the pastor. The elders shall exercise spiritual oversight of the church, provide support to the pastor in determining and directing the vision, strategy and purpose of the church. An elder may elect to take a sabbatical as needed from time to time for rest and spiritual renewal. It is envisaged that the elders and pastor(s) will meet as often as considered necessary. When a new elder is required, nominations for appointment can be made by any church member for consideration by the pastor(s) and elders. A recommendation for a new elder will be made to the church for ratification by church members.

- **Senior Pastor:** As an elder the senior pastor of this church shall be a male baptized believer who is in agreement with the Statement of Faith, recommended by a selection committee that has been appointed by the elders and endorsed by the church members. Terms and conditions shall be determined in writing at the time of appointment and subject to periodic review. He shall take initiative in providing and promoting leadership, preaching and teaching the Gospel, evangelism, shepherding and discipling members, reaching out to prospective members and administering the ordinances. He will be an ex-officio member of church committees as assigned by the elders.
- **Associate Pastor(s):** As an elder, all that applies to senior pastor applies to the associate pastor(s) with the exception that the associate pastor(s) will only initiate leadership over his assigned ministry segment or other ministries and responsibilities as assigned by the elders.

**Elder Removal:** It is envisaged that the removal of a church elder would only be for reasons of not adhering to the Statement of Faith or conduct incompatible with a position of leadership within the church. If such a course of action is deemed appropriate, discussions should take place between the parties in an effort to amicably resolve the situation. If this is not possible, a majority of elders will approach an appropriate intermediary from the International Baptist Convention to provide spiritual oversight and direction for reconciliation or removal from service.

**Ministry Leaders:** The elders shall appoint and remove such ministry leaders as may be necessary to carry out the ministries and vision of the church. The elders shall be responsible for ensuring coordination of the ministries and providing appropriate leadership, support and encouragement.

## **VII. ADMINISTRATION**

### **Meetings:**

- 1) An Annual General Meeting will be held in January each year and will include a financial report covering the previous year, senior pastor's report, ministry leaders' reports and presentation of a budget to cover the coming year.
- 2) Quarterly Congregational Meetings will also be held in April, July and October and will include a financial report and senior pastor's report.
- 3) In addition, ad hoc meetings may be called at any time by the pastor or a majority of elders with at least 15 members of the church membership in attendance.
- 4) Three weeks written notice of all meetings will be given to church members to allow for submission of agenda items to a named elder, and the agenda will be issued one week before the meeting. In exceptional circumstances and upon the specific decision by the pastor and a majority of elders, the period of notice can be reduced. In such a case, every effort will be made to notify the church membership prior to the meeting.

### **Financial matters:**

- 1) The church accounts should be audited on an annual basis by a suitably qualified person outside the church leadership and presented at the April congregational meeting. The elders should annually suggest a suitable auditor, which should be ratified at the Annual General Meeting.
- 2) The elders should appoint a treasurer on an annual basis who will be responsible for the church finances and keeping appropriate records.
- 3) In addition to the treasurer, the elders should also appoint, on an annual basis, at least one other authorized signatory who will be able to sign on the church bank account and contracts entered into by the church.

### **Government and Consensus:**

Jesus Christ is the head of the Church from whom the congregation takes its leadership. In submission to Christ, elders will lead and guide the church through judiciously, compassionately and prayerfully seeking the consensus of the membership of the church in forming decisions and direction for the church. Special consideration for seeking a strong consensus should be sought for the following:

- Appointment of elders.
- Appointment of pastor(s).
- Sale or purchase of land and buildings by the church.
- Changes to the Constitution.

## **VIII. PROPERTY RIGHTS AND DISSOLUTION**

If the church membership desires to dissolve and cease to function as a church of like faith and practice, or if the membership should dissolve, the property rights shall be assigned to the International Baptist Convention for the development and promotion of English-speaking churches in Europe.