

Dauphin First Baptist Church

Dauphin, Manitoba

Est. 1897

Documents

(Statement of Faith, Covenant,
Constitution, By-Laws)

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STATEMENT OF FAITH

We, the members of Dauphin First Baptist Church, Dauphin, Manitoba, accept wholeheartedly the revelation of God given in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and confess the faith therein set forth. We here explicitly assert the doctrines, which we regard as crucial to the understanding and proclamation of the Gospel and to practical Christian living.

1. The Bible

We believe the Bible, comprised of the Old and New Testaments, is the divinely inspired Word of God and is our final authority in all matters of faith, practice and doctrine.
(II Timothy 3:16)

2. God

We believe in the one true God, who is without beginning or end, who created heaven and earth. He is revealed to human kind in three co-equal persons; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
(John 14:10-26; 20:19-22)

2.1. God the Father

We believe in God the Father; who is infinite in knowledge, wisdom and power; who is holy, righteous and just. He lovingly rules over all creation, hears and answers prayer, and desires a close relationship with every human person.
(1 John 3:1; Psalm 99:9; Daniel 4:34-35)

2.2. God the Son (The Lord Jesus Christ)

We believe in God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is co-eternal with the Father; who through His virgin birth, became a

man without ceasing to be God. He lived a sinless life. He died on a cross as payment for the sins of all human kind. He physically rose from the dead and ascended into heaven. All things in heaven and on earth have been placed under His authority. He is the head of the church and mediator between God and human kind. (Matthew 1:18-25; Hebrews 4:15; I Corinthians 15:3-4; I Timothy 2:5-6; John 1:1-5; Philippians 2:5-11).

2.3. God the Holy Spirit

We believe in God the Holy Spirit; who is co-eternal with the Father and the Son. He convicts all persons of their sinfulness, creates within them a sense of guilt and fear of judgment and reaffirms God's offer of forgiveness through faith in the finished work of Christ. He indwells all who believe in Christ, helps them understand and apply the teachings of Scripture, gifts and empowers them to serve Christ and His church. (John 16:5-15; Ephesians 3:16-21; Hebrews 9:14)

3. Human Kind

We believe that every human person is a unique creation of God, made in His image, and as such, is a person of dignity and value, capable of enjoying meaningful relationships and living in peace with God and others.
(Genesis 1:26-27)

3.1. Human Sinfulness

We believe that every person is born with a sinful nature and therefore sins in thought, word and deed. This incurs physical, moral and spiritual death resulting in separation from God. (Romans 5:17-19; 8:7-8; 3:23)

3.2. Human Limitations

We believe that human kind is totally unable to restore the relationship with God that sin has destroyed. (Ephesians 2:8-9; Jeremiah 2:22; Isaiah 64:6)

4. Salvation

We believe that salvation is a free gift from God; by which He grants His undeserved favour and shows His mercy to human kind.

(Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 3:24)

4.1. Penalty for Sin

We believe that all who continue in sin against God will be brought forward before God for eternal judgment for their sins. (Romans 6:23; II Thessalonians 1:5-9; Matthew 25:45-46; II Timothy 4:8)

4.2. Death of Christ

We believe that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; that He became the only substitute who died in the place of all human kind. We believe that Christ's death was sufficient to pay the penalty for all sins committed by all persons through all time. (I Corinthians 15:3-4; Isaiah 53:6; Hebrews 10:12; Hebrews 9:14)

4.3. Repentance and Faith

We believe that all who repent of sin and place their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ receive forgiveness of sin and everlasting life, and now walk in fellowship with God. (John 3:16-17; Acts 2:38)

5. The Church

We believe in the holy Christian church, the body of which Christ is the head. (Colossians 1:18)

5.1. Universal Church

We believe that all who are made conscious of their sin, repent of such and profess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are instantly indwelt and sealed by the Holy Spirit and thereby made members of Christ's body - the Church. (Ephesians 1:13-14; I Corinthians 12:13; 1 John 4:13)

5.2. Local Church

We believe in the necessity of the local church as a place of worship, fellowship, teaching and service. We believe that each local church should be an autonomous body, operating under the headship of Christ. (Colossians 1:18; I Corinthians 12:12-27)

5.3. Church Ordinances

An ordinance is "an act or custom, instituted by Christ, and followed by the Christian church in its worship and ministry." Ordinances are commemorative acts; by which we remember and celebrate what Christ has done for us. They impart no saving grace to the one who participates in them.

We believe in and practice the two ordinances Christ has given to the church: Water Baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper (Communion).

5.3.1. Water Baptism

We believe baptism to be the total immersion of a believer in water, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as an act of obedience to Christ. (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 8:36-39; Romans 6:3-4)

5.3.2. The Lord's Supper

We believe the Lord's Supper to be the eating of bread and drinking of the cup; by which we remember the broken body and shed blood of Christ, offered in payment for our sins. (Luke 22:13-20; I Corinthians 11:17-34)

5.4. Church and State

We believe that church and state each have specific mandates from God and function best when each is free from undue influence by the other.

(Acts 1:8; Romans 13:1-5; Acts 5:27-29; Matthew 22:15-22)

5.5. Christian Duty

We believe that, as members of Christ's church, we are called to glorify God by obeying the teachings of the Old and New Testament Scriptures. (Matthew 5:16; Psalm 119:105)

5.6. Christian Mission

We believe that, as members of Christ's church, we are to tell others what Christ has done for us and invite them to have faith in Him. We believe that we have been commissioned to teach those who believe to obey Christ's commands. We further believe that we are called to take this message to all persons in every country on earth. (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15)

6. Return of Christ

We believe in the personal, visible and bodily return of the Lord Jesus Christ as promised in the Scriptures. (John 14:1-3; Acts 1:6-11; Revelation 19:11-16)

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, Son and Holy Spirit; we, in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We will endeavor, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love, to pray for one another and to seek to help one another grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Together we will support and encourage those we have affirmed as leaders. We will be thoughtful and courteous to one another, slow to take offense and quick to forgive and to seek forgiveness even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us.

We will cultivate a time of personal Bible reading and prayer and establish family devotions where possible.

We will raise children entrusted to our care, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

We will diligently seek to gather together for worship and service. We will be good stewards of all that God has given us, and will give as God has prospered us, not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver.

We will seek to be honest and faithful in the sight of all people. We will seek to reach others for Christ by sharing the Gospel in word and deed. We will strive to carry out His commission to spread the Gospel throughout the whole world.

When we remove ourselves from this place, we will as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry on the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's word.

CONSTITUTION

1. Name

This church shall be known as Dauphin First Baptist Church.

2. Affiliation

This church is in association and agrees to cooperate with the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada (CBWC) churches in the Heartland Area (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), the CBWC, the Canadian Baptist Ministries and the Baptist World Alliance, or their legal successors; and to support the world wide work of their missionary and service agencies.

3. Purpose

Dauphin First Baptist Church was established and is maintained as a Christian Church of the Baptist denomination to promote the message and works of the Christian gospel in the community. We exist to worship God and enjoy His presence, to bring all persons into a relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ and His gospel, to support and care for one another and to train and equip believers to use their gifts for service in God's work. We believe God's work, the work of the gospel, includes relief of poverty and other acts which are charitable in nature.

4. Operations

4.1. Location

This church seeks to minister to people in Dauphin and the surrounding area.

4.2. Property

This church may hold property and any other assets which will help it fulfill its purpose. The officers who shall exercise the powers of the church in any dealing with its property are the Church Board as defined in the By-Laws.

4.3. Voting Privileges

The persons who, according to the rules of the congregation, are entitled to vote on church business are the "members" as defined in the By-Laws.

4.4. Government

This church shall be governed according to democratic principles. Unless otherwise stipulated, a simple majority vote of the membership present shall be sufficient to decide any item of business.

5. Method of Support

The expenses of this church shall be chiefly defrayed by the voluntary tithes and offerings of the congregation.

6. Non-Profit Status

The operations of Dauphin First Baptist Church, shall be carried on without purpose of financial gain for its members. Any financial profits or gains to the organization called Dauphin First Baptist Church, shall be used to help the church fulfill its purpose.

7. Dissolution

In the event of dissolution, all assets remaining after the retirement of all debts shall be transferred to the Head Office of the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada. The church shall be considered dissolved if so decided by the

membership, or when the church has not held an annual business meeting for two consecutive years.

8. Amendments

Revisions of this Constitution may be made at any regular or special business meeting of the church, subject to the following conditions:

8.1. Notice of Motion

A Notice of Motion shall be posted in writing to the church at least three weeks in advance, specifying the proposed revision. The same notice of motion shall be printed in at least two weekly church bulletins.

8.2. Quorum

Twenty-five percent (25%) of members of the active roll of the church membership as defined in the By-Laws, shall be present and voting for the revision to be considered.

8.3. Percentage to Pass

A seventy-five percent majority vote (75%) of active members present shall be required to pass any revisions to this constitution.

BY-LAWS

1. Admission to Membership

Dauphin First Baptist Church, is a non-profit, "voluntary association" of persons who agree to abide by the terms and conditions of membership as outlined in these Documents and who submit to the authority of the church corporately.

Any baptized believer who has personally received Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord (See Article 4, "Salvation", in the Statement of Faith), shall be considered eligible for membership, following a review of the Church Documents (e.g. Constitution, By-Laws, Handbook), approval by the Pastor and Church Board, and affirmation of the church membership.

1.1. Admission by Baptism

This church teaches and practices believer's baptism by immersion as taught in the New Testament. Any believer of an accountable age, who, after a confession of faith, has been baptized by immersion, shall be considered eligible for church membership. We encourage all believers to be baptized.

In addition, persons of an accountable age, baptized as believers, but by a mode other than immersion shall be considered eligible for church membership following an interview by and recommendation of the Pastor.

1.2. Baptism by another mode for Medical Reasons

The congregation may approve baptism by another mode, and receive into membership a believer who may not be baptized by immersion for medical reasons. In such a situation, however, there shall be a clear presentation of the circumstances and the applicant shall give a testimony to his/her salvation through Jesus Christ.

1.3. Admission by Transfer

Any believer who, after a confession of faith, has been baptized by immersion and is currently a member of another Canadian Baptist Church shall be considered eligible for church membership, subject to the receiving of a "Letter of Transfer" from the church where the applicant is currently a member.

1.4. Admission by Letter of Recommendation

Any believer who, after a confession of faith, has been baptized and is currently a member of another church of like faith and order, shall be considered eligible for church membership, subject to the receiving of a "Letter of Recommendation" from the church where the applicant is currently a member.

1.5. Admission by Statement of Christian Experience

Any believer who, after a confession of faith, has been baptized by immersion but who is not currently a member of another church, shall be considered eligible for membership following an interview and recommendation of the Pastor and the Church Board.

1.6. Admission by Restoration

Persons who have lost their membership for any reason may be restored to membership upon recommendation of the Pastor, Church Board and congregational vote.

1.7. Preparation for Membership

All persons seeking membership are required to receive a copy of the Documents and review and accept the same before being received into membership.

1.8. Privileges and Responsibilities of Members

Members shall have the right to participate in various aspects of Church Ministry, including elected office. Members shall be responsible for the ministries and operations of the Church.

1.9. Expectations of Members

All members shall be expected to maintain Biblical standards of integrity and morality revealed in lifestyle and relationships.

2. Removal from Membership

The Church Board, as defined elsewhere in these By-Laws, may act to remove a person from membership as follows:

2.1. By Death

2.2. By Transfer

When the Church Clerk receives a request for transfer of a person's membership to another church, or receives notice that a member has joined another church, the name of that person shall be removed from the membership roll.

2.3. By Resignation

Any member wishing to voluntarily withdraw from membership shall inform the Church Clerk of his/her desire. Before removing the member's name, the Church Board shall review the request and seek to resolve any issues that may arise out of the review.

2.4. Inactive

Should a member remain inactive by not participating in the worship, witness or business activities of the church without just cause for a period of one year, the Church Board shall review and seek to resolve any issues that may arise out of the review before removing the member's name.

2.5. For Just Cause

Should a member's actions become an offense to the good name of the Church; the Church Board may act to suspend that person's name from the membership roll, subject to Section 8.3 Church Discipline.

2.6. Congregational Ratification

All actions taken by the Church Board under Section 2.5 shall be ratified by the Church membership. Should the membership not ratify the Board's action, that person shall be immediately restored as a member in good standing.

3. Membership Roll

The Church shall maintain a current and accurate listing of all members affiliated with Dauphin First Baptist Church. The Membership Roll shall consist of all who have been admitted to membership as outlined in Section 1 of these By-Laws.

3.1. Annual Membership Review

The Church Board shall annually review the attendance and support of those whose names are on the Membership Roll and consider any concerns arising from the review.

3.2. Non-Resident Members

Non-resident members are members who have moved away but who have not yet transferred their membership. The Church Board shall seek to contact all non-resident members and encourage them to join a church of like faith and practice in the community to which they have moved.

3.3. Adherents

Adherents are believers who have regularly attended and supported the church for a least six months, but who have not formally become members.

3.3.1. Privileges of Adherents

Adherents are welcome to attend all Church Business meetings, where they shall have voice but no vote. (In certain situations the privilege of vote may be extended to Adherents by a majority vote of members present) Adherents may participate in all ministry activities of the church and may hold any position except for elected offices identified under Section 7 as open to members only.

3.3.2. Responsibilities of Adherents

Adherents participating in leadership roles shall agree to be guided by the Documents and should an adherent's actions become an offense to the good name of the Church, the Church Board may act to suspend the adherent from performance of leadership duties.

4. Documents Review

At least once each year, the Church Board shall review the Statement of Faith, Covenant, Constitution and By-Laws and recommend any changes it deems appropriate to keep them applicable to the current ministry of the Church.

5. Church Meetings

This church recognizes Christ as its Head and seeks to function as a "community of equals" under His authority. Regular meetings for worship, fellowship, witness and conduct of business shall be held as outlined below.

5.1. Worship Services

The Church body shall meet regularly each week (Sunday) for worship, prayer, Bible study and fellowship. The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least once each month. The Church may gather at such other times as the Church Membership or Church Board may decide.

5.2. Business Meetings

As a "community of equals" under Christ's authority, the church shall, in carrying out its business, prayerfully determine His will through the democratic process.

5.2.1. Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Church shall be held not later than the last day of September each year. At this meeting, the Membership shall recognize those involved in the growth and life of the church, receive and adopt the annual reports and internally audited financial statements, approve the Budget, and transact other business as required.

5.2.2. Semi-Annual Meetings

The Semi-Annual Meetings shall be held not later than the last day of February and the last day of June. At the June meeting the Membership will elect officers for the coming year, approve the budget, and transact other business as required.

5.2.3. Routine Business Meetings

The Church may meet at any time, without notice, to admit persons to membership or elect Delegates to denominational meetings.

5.2.4. Special Business Meetings

Special meetings to deal with specific issues may be called at any time by the Church Board, or upon written request, signed by not fewer than ten members and given to the Moderator for submission to the Church Board and response. Two Sunday's notice of any special meeting, stating its time, place and purpose shall be given from the pulpit and published in the church bulletin.

5.2.5. Quorum

The quorums for the regular and special business meetings shall be as follows.

5.2.5.1. Routine Business Meetings

For the Annual meeting and other meetings dealing with routine business items, a total of 12 active members present shall constitute a quorum. Each member present shall have one vote. No proxy votes are permitted.

5.2.5.2. Special Business Meetings

Twenty-five percent (25%) of Active Membership shall constitute a quorum for meetings dealing with the calling or dismissing of a Pastor, amending the Statement of Faith, Covenant, Constitution, By-Laws or the purchase, sale, lease or major financing of church property (more than \$10,000).

5.2.6. Percentage to Pass

The goal of the church body shall be to strive for consensus in all decisions. However, a simple majority of those present and voting shall be sufficient to carry any motion, except as provided below.

Motions to call or dismiss a Pastor, motions to amend the Statement of Faith, Covenant or Constitution and motions to purchase, sell, lease or finance Church property (more than \$10,000) shall require a 75% majority of those present and voting to pass.

5.2.7. Procedural Authority

In general meetings shall be governed by "Robert's Rules of Order (Revised)" except in certain situations addressed by Scripture (e.g. personal conflicts, Matthew 18)

5.2.8. Method of Voting

Most votes shall be conducted by show of hands. However, any member of the church, when a resolution is about to be put to vote, may request that the vote on that question be taken by secret ballot.

5.2.9. Chair

The Church Moderator shall preside at Church business meetings. The Church Board shall appoint another person to chair that meeting if the Moderator is unable.

5.2.10. Election of Officers

At the June Semi-Annual business meeting the Church Officers and members of the Ministry Teams shall be elected and the Church shall also appoint auditors for the ensuing year. All Officers so elected shall assume office on September 1st.

6. The Pastor and Pastoral Staff

6.1. The Senior Pastor

The Senior Pastor, under the guidance of the Church Board, shall be the Under-Shepherd of the Congregation, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The Pastor's major task is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to minister to the spiritual needs of the congregation (II Timothy 4:1-5; Titus 1:5-9) and to assist in training and encouraging those in the congregation in the use of their God-given gifts.

6.2. Associate Pastors

The Church may call and appoint one or more Associate Pastors, who shall share in the ministerial duties under the guidance of the Senior Pastor and Church Board.

6.3. Qualifications

Each Pastor appointed by the Church shall be eligible or seek to be eligible for credentialing by the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada.

6.4. Letter of Understanding

Each Pastor appointed by the Church shall have a written letter of understanding, duly signed by the Pastor and Church Board, which shall include a job description, conditions of employment, salary, benefits and other items of mutual interest to the Pastor and the Church.

6.5. Voting Privileges

The Senior Pastor and Associate Pastors shall be ex-officio, non-voting members of the Church Board and any other Committee or Task Force appointed by the Church.

6.6. Pastoral Search Committee

When the need arises for the calling of a Pastor, a Pastoral Search Committee of not less than five members shall be elected by the Church on recommendation from the Church Board. One member of the Pastoral Search Committee must be a member of the Church Board.

Before approaching possible candidates for any pastoral position, the Pastoral Search Committee shall first consult with the Regional Minister of the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada as to the process, and follow the guidelines recommended by the denomination.

7. Elected Church Officers

All Church Officers shall be members in good standing and include the following:

The Moderator, The Church Board, The Treasurer, The Church Clerk

7.1. Terms of Office

The Church Officers are elected for a two year term (maximum of three consecutive terms) with no more than fifty percent (50%) change per year.

8. The Church Board

8.1. Membership

The Church Board shall consist of the following members in good standing:

Pastor(s) (ex-officio) and a minimum of 3 to a maximum of 10 other members as elected by the congregation (including the Moderator).

8.2. Responsibilities

Members of the Church Board shall provide leadership and guidance to the Church, seeking to prepare God's people for works of service. They shall seek to encourage, support and facilitate ministries conducted by the Ministry Teams.

8.3. Church Discipline

The Church Board shall be responsible for the examination and discipline of the Church Members, Adherents, Pastoral Staff, Officers and members of the Church Board.

It shall be the duty of the Church Board to seek to reclaim these members or adherents.

When in any case they are satisfied that the member cannot be reclaimed, they shall present a recommendation that the member's name be stricken from the membership roll.

(Matthew 18:15-17)

Within thirty days, the Church Board shall set a time, date and place for a closed meeting for members only to consider the recommendation. The minutes of this meeting shall be sealed. The member concerned shall be given written notice of such meeting and shall be advised of their right to attend the same for the purpose of opposing such recommendation. If the member appears, they shall be heard before the recommendation is discussed. If the member does not appear, the recommendation shall be discussed, their absence notwithstanding. The recommendation will require twenty-five percent (25%) of membership present with a 75% majority of those present and voting to pass. (Section 5.2.5.2. Special Business Meetings).

8.4. Meetings of the Church Board

The Church Board shall meet monthly at least ten times a year.

9. Ministry Teams

Ministry Teams exist to administrate the current ministries of the Church and are accountable to the congregation through the Church Board. Duties will be maintained in the Church Handbook. All Ministry Team members shall be Members and Adherents in good standing.

9.1. Ad hoc Committees or Task Forces

Ministry Teams have authority to select Ad hoc Committees or Task Forces to fulfill their responsibilities as required. Ad hoc Committee Members may consist of members or adherents of the church.

10. Nominating Team

At the Annual Business meeting, the Church may elect two members to work in coordination with the Board to prepare a slate of nominees for the offices to be filled in the upcoming year. This list shall be posted not less than two Sundays prior to the date of the Annual Meeting.

10.1. Method of Vote

Except for those offices filled by acclamation, all elections shall be conducted by secret ballot. All ballots shall be destroyed once the election is completed.

Two scrutineers shall be appointed by the Moderator from the floor. The scrutineers shall count, report the results to the Moderator and destroy the ballots.

11. Policies and Procedures

11.1. Fiscal Year

The Church's fiscal year shall be September 1 to August 31.

11.2. Inspection of Financial Books and Records

Financial books and records maintained by the Church Officers may be inspected by any member at any time, provided adequate notice is given.

11.3. Audit of Accounts

All financial records of the Church and the organizations it sponsors shall receive an annual audit. The Church Board shall recommend an external auditor or at least two qualified persons to serve as auditors who shall be appointed at the Annual Meeting and serve for that calendar year. Should the Treasurer of any organization sponsored by the Church resign during a fiscal year, the books kept by that Treasurer shall be audited prior to being given to the next Treasurer.

11.4. Signing Officers

At least three members, one of whom shall be the Treasurer, shall be appointed to serve as Signing Officers. The signatures of any two shall appear on all cheques issued by the Church. To avoid conflict of interest, no Pastor may serve as a signing officer.

11.5. Delegates

Each year, delegates shall be appointed by the membership to represent the Church at the Regional Area and/or Canadian Baptist of Western Canada Assemblies. Delegates shall report back to the Church on matters transacted at each assembly.

12. The Church Handbook

The Church shall maintain a Church Handbook which provides detailed Job Descriptions and other detailed information relating to Church operations. The Handbook shall be reviewed and affirmed annually by the congregation.