

Oasis Church Constitution

Approved February 2005, Amended February 2009

ARTICLE 1: NAME AND AFFILIATION

The name of this church shall be Oasis Church (hereinafter referred to as Oasis). While this church is autonomous, it has voluntarily chosen to associate with the Minnesota Baptist Conference, a subsidiary of the Baptist General Conference. Oasis was originally organized as Elim Baptist Church on September 13, 1961.

ARTICLE 2: STATEMENT OF INCORPORATION

This organization is a religious non-profit corporation organized under and pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 137A, Laws of Minnesota, Minnesota Nonprofit Act and was incorporated in the State of Minnesota on September 27, 1961.

ARTICLE 3: VISION, MISSION AND VALUES OF OASIS CHURCH

Vision: To touch and transform lives in our world with God's redeeming love and power.

Mission: To invite others on the journey to know and follow Jesus Christ.

Defining Values

1. **God deserves our full devotion:** We **REACH UP** by giving God the honor that is due him through acts such as individual and corporate worship, prayer and giving. (John 4:24; Ephesians 1:22; Leviticus 27:10)
2. **People matter to God:** We **REACH OUT** by supporting the personal, local and worldwide spread of the Christian faith to those who have not heard of Christ, and by engaging in mercy ministries that help less fortunate people live with dignity and peace. (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; Galatians 6:10; 2 Peter 3:9)
3. **People are designed to live in community:** We **REACH IN** by meeting together regularly to encourage and edify one another, to study and apply the Bible and to serving one another. (Ephesians 4:11-12; Hebrews 13:23-25; James 1:22-25)

Oasis will ground its people, programs and procedures in these purposes, and center its activities on the ultimate goal of fulfilling its vision and mission. It is the responsibility of the Leadership Council to review the mission and vision to determine measurable goals under each value for the next year.

ARTICLE 4: STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

It is the foundational belief of this church that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God and the ultimate authority on matters of faith and practice in both the life of the church and the life of its members. Therefore, we will abide by its directives in all matters of faith and conduct to the best of our understanding.

The Trinity

The Bible attests there is one living and true God who forever lives as three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit (the Trinity). While equal in their roles, they are three distinct persons and unified in their actions and goals. (Genesis 1:26; Matthew 28:19; John 1:1-3; John 4:24; Romans 1:19-20)

God The Father

God the Father is a personal spirit whose perfect character will always define and demonstrate wisdom, love and power. In unending mercy and compassion, the Father is concerned with the lives of people, hears and answers prayer and offers spiritual renewal and a loving relationship with any individual who trusts in the work of Jesus Christ, his Son. (Matthew 23:9; John 3:16-17; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 1 Peter 1:3)

Jesus Christ the Son

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is coequal with the Father. Jesus, the only person ever to live a perfect life, offered himself as a sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on the cross. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate God's power over sin and death. He returned to heaven after forty days, and continues to intercede and work on behalf of his followers. At the end of time he will return again to earth and reign as the master of all creation. (Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38; John 1:1; 20:30-31; Acts 1:9-11; 2 Corinthians 5:21)

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is equal with the Father and the Son as God. He is present in the world to make individuals aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He also presides in every Christian from the moment of salvation, providing them with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth and guidance in doing what is right as they seek to live daily under the direction of the Holy Spirit. (John 14:14-17; John 16:7-14; Romans 8:26; Titus 3:5-6)

The Bible

The Bible is God's word to all people. Written by human authors under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit, it is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and living. Because it is inspired by God, it is truth without any mixture of error in its original form. (Psalm 119:1-16, 105; John 8:31-32; Acts 20:32; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21)

People

People are made in the image of God to be like him in character and action. They are the supreme object of his creation. Although they have tremendous potential for good, they are damaged and flawed by an attitude of disobedience toward God called *sin*. As a result of this attitude, people are separated from God. (Genesis 1:26-27; Jeremiah 17:9-10; Romans 3:23; 5:6-8; 6:9-10; Titus 3:5-7)

Eternity

People are created to exist forever. They will exist eternally either separated from God by sin or united with God through forgiveness and salvation. Heaven and hell are places of eternal existence. To be eternally separated from God is hell. To be eternally in union with God is heaven. (Luke 16:19-31; John 14:2-3; 1 Thessalonians 1:9; 4:17; 1 Peter 1:4-5; Revelation 14:10-11)

Salvation

Salvation is a gift from God. People can never make up for their sin by self improvement or good works. Only by repenting and trusting in Jesus Christ as God's offer of forgiveness can any person be saved from sin's penalty. Eternal life begins when one receives Jesus Christ into his/her life by faith. (John 17:3; Ephesians 2:8-9; 1 Peter 1:3)

Christian Living

It should be the goal of every Christian to continually become more like the character of Jesus Christ. This includes faithfulness to God and service to others characterized by love, integrity, honesty, compassion and generosity. Personal and spiritual growth such as this is only possible

through the power of the Holy Spirit in the Christian's life. (Galatians 5:1; Colossians 3:1-17; Hebrews 5:12; 2 Peter 3:18)

The Church

The Church is composed of all people who acknowledge Jesus Christ as the Savior and Master of their lives. The Bible instructs all Christians to gather together regularly to devote themselves to worship, prayer, biblical teaching, fellowship, service and outreach to the world. (Acts 2:42-47; Ephesians 2:19-22; Hebrews 10:24-25)

Ordinances

Jesus Christ gave his followers two symbolic experiences to be practiced in the local church until the time of his return.

- The Lord's Supper

Communion, otherwise known as the Lord's Supper, which is celebrated to help us remember Christ's sacrifice for us—the bread represents his body and the cup his blood. Every follower of Jesus Christ is invited to participate in the Lord's Supper. (Mark 14:22-25; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

- Baptism

Baptism is the public expression of the transformation God has started within us. Based on the precedent of Scripture, Oasis practices a believer's baptism. Based on the profession of personal commitment to Jesus Christ, the individual is then baptized as a response to his/her faith in Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 8:35-38; 10:44-48)

The End of the World

The Bible states that Jesus is personally coming back to earth to physically remove all of his followers from the earth. Some will still be living, while others will be physically resurrected from the dead. Every person will face God's final judgment and be declared innocent or guilty. The innocent will spend eternity with God, in heaven, while those found guilty will spend eternity separated from God in hell. Both of these are genuine, eternal and irreversible states of existence. (Matthew 16:27; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 1 Corinthians 15:20-24, 35-38; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; Revelation 20:4-15)

ARTICLE 5: ORGANIZATION AND LEADERSHIP

Section 1: The church's true leader is Jesus Christ, and it is our hope to understand and follow his direction. To discern Jesus' will for the church we must seek his guidance through the Bible, prayer, wise counsel and prompting from the Holy Spirit.

Section 2: The overall leadership responsibilities of Oasis are shared among the Senior Pastor and Leadership Council. They are to ensure that this body fulfills its vision and mission, and are ultimately accountable to the congregation (Hebrews 13:17).

Section 3: No member, director or officer of this corporation shall have any personal liability for any obligation of the corporation. Except as otherwise provided in the Bylaws, directors, officers, employees and agents of the corporation shall be indemnified to the maximum extent permitted by Chapter 317 of the Minnesota State Statutes, as from time to time amended, for expenses and liabilities arising by reason for their position with, or by acts in such capacities on behalf of the corporation or another corporation which they may serve at the request of the corporation.

ARTICLE 6: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: There shall be two categories of membership in this church: Constitutional Member and Member.

Section 2: Qualifications for Constitutional Members

1. A personal commitment of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and a desire to live a Christian life.
2. Completion of a membership class. Anyone under the age of 18 who has been baptized and completed the membership class will be noted as a junior member. At age 18, this person may become a voting constitutional member.
3. Agreement with Oasis' vision, mission, values, Constitution and Bylaws expressed by agreeing to a membership covenant.
4. A believer's baptism by immersion as an expression of faith in Jesus Christ.

Section 3: Qualifications for Members

1. A personal commitment of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and a desire to live a Christian life.
2. Completion of a membership class. Anyone under the age of 18 who has completed the membership class will be noted as a junior member. At age 18, this person may become a voting member.
3. Agreement with Oasis' vision, mission, values, Constitution and Bylaws expressed by agreeing to a membership covenant.

Section 4: Procedures for Membership

1. A person interested in pursuing membership will complete an introductory class that covers Oasis' vision, mission, values, core beliefs and membership responsibilities. Children are welcome to take this class and become a Junior Member with full voting membership possible at age 18.
2. Following the membership class, the person will meet with two Leadership Council members to confirm this person's testimony of faith and desire to uphold the responsibilities of membership and support the vision and mission of Oasis. He/she will also be presented with the Membership Covenant to review and agree to.
3. The Leadership Council will present those people who have successfully completed the first two steps in this process at the next regularly scheduled congregational meeting to be accepted into membership by a simple majority vote of those members present.

Section 5: Membership Covenant

Having received Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Savior and being in agreement with the Vision, Mission, Values, Constitution and Bylaws of Oasis, I now sense the Holy Spirit has led me to unite with the Oasis church family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and the other members of Oasis to do the following:

I will protect the unity of Christ's church by acting in love toward other members by following leadership and refusing to gossip. I will share the responsibility of Christ's church by praying for its growth, by inviting spiritual explorers to attend and by warmly welcoming those who visit. I will serve Christ's church by discovering my gifts and talents, by being equipped to serve and by developing a servant's heart. I will support the testimony of my church by attending faithfully, trying to live a godly life and giving regularly.

Section 6: Voting Rights

1. Constitutional Members shall have the right to vote on the following matters: the annual budget of the church, the disposition of the assets of the church, the merger or dissolution of the church, the acquisition of real property and related indebtedness, amendments to the Articles of

Incorporation, Constitution or Bylaws of the Church, Leadership Council members and the calling or removal of the Senior Pastor. Each Constitutional Member age 18 or older is entitled to one vote.

2. Members shall have the right to vote on all matters granted to Constitutional Members except on amendments to the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution or Bylaws of the Church, Leadership Council members and the calling or removal of a Senior Pastor. Each Member age 18 or older is entitled to one vote.

3. Regular attenders: While they are invited to be involved in the life of the church and welcome to attend any congregational meeting, they are prohibited from voting on any church matters.

Section 7: Termination of Membership

Members shall be removed from the church membership roll for the following reasons:

1. Death
2. Joining another church
3. Written personal request of an individual to be removed from the membership roll
4. Inactivity. Should someone cease being involved in the body for at least one year, a Leadership Council member will contact this person to learn more about the matter. Should the person choose to remain inactive, his/her name will be removed from the membership roll at the next Annual Meeting. This does not apply to members who are serving in vocational missionary work.
5. Dismissal by the Leadership Team according to the following conditions:
 - a. The member's life and conduct is not in accordance with the membership covenant and biblical principles.
 - b. Procedures for the dismissal of a member shall be according to Matthew 18:15-17.

Section 8: Restoration of Membership

Should a dismissed member seek reconciliation and demonstrate a repentant heart, upon the recommendation of Leadership Council, the congregation may vote to readmit this individual to membership following the precedent established in 2 Corinthians 2:7-8.

ARTICLE 7: AMENDMENTS

This Constitution, the Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws may be amended at any properly posted congregational meeting, provided that written copies of the proposed amendment(s) are available and an oral or written announcement has been made to the membership at least twenty-eight (28) days prior to such a meeting. Only Constitutional Members may vote to amend this Constitution, Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. A three-fourths majority vote of those qualified, present and voting, provided a quorum is present, is necessary to pass any amendment.

ARTICLE 8: STATEMENT OF DISSOLUTION

In case of division of the membership, the church property will belong to those members who abide by this constitution. If there be any disagreement as to which division best fits within the constitution, the membership shall call upon the leadership of the Minnesota Baptist Conference to mediate and render a decision. This decision will be final. In case of discontinuance of the church and its programs, the remaining church assets will be transferred to the Minnesota Baptist Conference.