

PREAMBLE

We, the organizing group of people of the Maplewood Church, desiring to do things decently and in order do hereby unite to establish a church dedicated to the defense and the maintenance of our belief and faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

Therefore, we set forth by this document the constitution which will govern our congregational, spiritual, and material affairs.

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of the congregation shall be the Maplewood Church of Pettis County, Missouri.

ARTICLE II: DOCTRINAL STATEMENT AND KEY ETHICAL STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

We believe:

1. BIBLE – Every Word in the original writings of the Old & New Testaments is inspired by God without error, and is, therefore, authoritative for our belief and conduct.¹ (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Matthew 5:17-18).

2. GOD – God exists eternally in three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one God (Genesis 1:1; Matthew 28:19-20; John 1:1, 14; Acts 5:3-4; 2 Corinthians 13:14).

3. MAN – Man was created in the image and likeness of God, but in Adam all mankind fell into sin with the result that all men are sinners, hopelessly

¹ Maplewood Church believes that the Bible is the Final Authority for Matters of Belief and Conduct. The Doctrinal Statement does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Maplewood Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, the unified voice of our Board of Elders is Maplewood Church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

sinful in themselves, apart from the grace of God (Genesis 1:26, 9:6; Rom. 3:23, & 5:12; Eph. 2:1-5).

4. JESUS CHRIST – The eternal Son of God incarnate in the Lord Jesus Christ, being born of the Virgin Mary, and is fully God and fully man (John 1:1:14, 1:18, 5:18; Hebrews 1:1-9, 5:8; 1 John 5:20; 1 Timothy 2:5).

5. SALVATION – Salvation is received by faith alone in Christ, who died for our sins and rose again (Acts 4:12, 13:38-39; 1 Corinthians 15:14; Romans 4:4-5; 5:1; John 3:16; Ephesians 2:8-9; Acts 16:31).

6. ASSURANCE – All who are born of the Spirit through faith in Christ have assurance of salvation and are eternally secure in Christ (Romans 5:1; 1 John 5:13; Ephesians 4:30; John 10:27-29, 17:12; John 6:37).

7. HOLY SPIRIT – The Holy Spirit is the third person in the Godhead, who regenerates, indwells, baptizes, and seals all believers in Christ and enables them to live the holy life God desires for His children (John 4:16-17, 16:7-15; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 12:13; Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:30; Galatians 5:16-23).

8. CHURCH – The church is composed of all those who have personally trusted Christ as Savior in this present age. It is the Body and Bride of Christ and exists in two aspects, universal and local. Its mission is to witness to its Head, Jesus Christ, gather for worship, serve all men, make disciples and teach all nations (Ephesians 1:22-23, 5:24-30; 1 Corinthians 12:4-13, 12:27; Matthew 28:19-20).

9. ORDINANCES – The scriptural ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are for all believers in Christ (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 8:12, 36-38; Acts 9:18 & 10:47; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

10. CHRIST'S COMING – Rapture – We look forward to the imminent return of Christ. This is the blessed hope of Christ's return for His Church (1 Thessalonians 1:10, 4:16-18 & 5:4-10; John 14:1-3). Second Coming – When Jesus will come to earth again with His Church and establish His Millennial Reign on earth (Revelation 19:11-16 & 20:1-6).

11. ETERNAL STATE – There is an eternal state of punishment for the unsaved called Hell (Revelation 20:11-15), and an eternal state of blessing for the saved called Heaven (Revelation 21:1-8).

Members of the church agree to submit any legal dispute with the church for mediation before a mutually agreed-upon mediator, or if none can be agreed upon, one selected by Peacemaker Ministries. Lawsuits between believers, or threats of lawsuits between believers, are a matter of grave concern for the church, are contrary to biblical and church teaching, and mediation is an effort to resolve disputes in a biblical fashion. (1 Corinthians 6:1-7).

_____ **F. Statement of Final Authority on Matters of Faith and Conduct**
(initial)

The statement of faith in the Doctrinal Statement and Key Ethical Standards of Conduct does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Maplewood Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, the unified voice of our Board of Elders is Maplewood Church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

I have reviewed the statements above as indicated by my initials before each of them, and agree to be governed by all the provisions herein.

By signing this document, I agree to submit to the authority of the Christ's Church as here administered.

Name

Date

KEY ETHICAL STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Furthermore, in addition to our Doctrinal Statement, Maplewood Church has adopted these Key Ethical Standards which guide our conduct.

1. STATEMENT ON THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life (Psalms 139).

2. STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE, FAMILY, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Genesis 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Genesis 2:18-25). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe Marriage between a male and female to be the best setting for nurturing children and rearing them to serve Him in every vocation and in every part of a stable and successful society (Colossians 3:17-21; Ephesians 6:1-4). Every child deserves, in the providence of God, to have a mother and a father (Genesis 2:24; Proverbs 1:8).

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matthew 15:18-20; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Maplewood Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the Maplewood Church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Maplewood Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22).

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Rom. 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Maplewood Church.

3. STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE POLICY

Because God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man, a woman, and Himself, Maplewood Church will only recognize marriages between a biological man and a biological woman. Further, the pastors of Maplewood Church shall only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman. Finally, the facilities and property of Maplewood Church shall only host weddings or receptions of marriages between one man and one woman.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

1. The membership of this congregation shall be open to those who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, set forth under Article II and who support Maplewood Church through prayer, fellowship, corporate worship, service and material support.

2. The Board of Elders shall interview all applicants for membership, and shall ascertain that any such applicants agree with the Doctrinal Statement and Key Ethical Standards of Conduct and meet with the requirements as described under Article III, Section 1.

3. All applicants for membership are to be voted on at the next regular meeting of the Board of Elders. If accepted, they will be presented to the congregation for ratification.

4. Members may be dismissed when in the judgment of the Pastor and the Board of Elders, a member's conduct has become disorderly and inconsistent with accepted standards or doctrines of the church, as to bring reproach upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, disciplinary action should take place. The first step shall be by exhortation and admonition in love administered by the Pastor or in case of his absence by the Chairman of the Board of Elders (Galatians 6:1). If this attempt toward restoration and repentance shall fail, each step as prescribed by Matthew

APPENDIX

Church Membership Agreement

We believe that to carry on the religious mission of the church, to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons who associate with the church as members should abide by and agree to the following statements and conduct themselves in accordance with them.

We believe with Maplewood Church in the statements of faith and the ethical standards as outlined in ARTICLE II: DOCTRINAL STATEMENT AND KEY ETHICAL STANDARDS OF CONDUCT.

_____ **A. Statement of Faith**

(initial)

_____ **B. Statement on Life**

(initial)

_____ **C. Statement on Marriage, Family, Gender, and Sexuality**

(initial)

_____ **D. Statement on Church Discipline (Article III, Section 4, included below)**

(initial)

Members may be dismissed when in the judgment of the Pastor and the Board of Elders, a member's conduct has become disorderly and inconsistent with accepted standards or doctrines of the church, as to bring reproach upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, disciplinary action should take place. The first step shall be by exhortation and admonition in love administered by the Pastor or in case of his absence by the Chairman of the Board of Elders (Galatians 6:1). If this attempt toward restoration and repentance shall fail, each step as prescribed by Matthew 18:15-18 shall be followed. The witness, as prescribed by verse 16 of Matthew 18 shall be a majority of the members of the Board of Elders (see also 1 Corinthians 6:1-4). The person who has been subject to the disciplinary action shall be constantly remembered in prayer. If that person or persons confess and show satisfactory repentance in the matter of dismissal, the Board of Elders, subject to ratification by the church, may restore that person or persons to the membership roll.

_____ **E. Statement on Mediation**

(initial)

18:15-18 shall be followed. The witness, as prescribed by verse 16 of Matthew 18 shall be a majority of the members of the Board of Elders (see also 1 Corinthians 6:1-4). The person who has been subject to the disciplinary action shall be constantly remembered in prayer. If that person or persons confess and show satisfactory repentance in the matter of dismissal, the Board of Elders, subject to ratification by the church, may restore that person or persons to the membership roll.

If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY FACT MAY BE CONFIRMED. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven. (Matthew 18:15-18)

5. If a member is persistently negligent of his vows, as stated in Article III, Section 1., for a period of six (6) months, his/her name may be removed from the church membership roll by a vote of the Board of Elders.

6. Anyone wishing to terminate his or her membership must do so in writing. Oral communication is not sufficient. He or she may present this written, signed, and dated message to a Pastor or Elder or may mail it to the church office. This communication should include the following elements: "I wish to terminate my membership immediately. Signed: _____ Date: _____."

(See the Appendix to the Constitution for our Membership Covenant and application for Membership. Any person who wishes to join Maplewood Church as a member shall sign the Membership Covenant as a prerequisite for membership.)

ARTICLE IV: CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

1. An annual congregational meeting shall be held in the month of October each year to receive an annual report from the Elders and Pastor and to consider the state and well-being of the church.

2. Quarterly business meetings of the congregation shall be held during the months of January, April and July.

3. Special meetings of the congregation for any purposes may be called by the Chairman or any other member of the Board of Elders by

announcement in any public meeting one week prior to such meeting. At least one third of the voting members of the congregation must be present to transact business or to pass valid resolutions.

ARTICLE V: ELDERS

1. A Board of Elders, consisting of not less than three (3), shall be elected from the membership by the congregation to oversee the affairs of the church.

2. The Board of Elders in matters of election shall prepare and present to the Church two (2) weeks before the annual congregational meeting a list of nominees, if any, for the office of Elder. They shall be recognized for their spirituality and leadership qualities in matters pertaining to the Word of God (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). Any person nominated shall become an Elder by a two-thirds vote of the Elders and ratification by a simple majority of the congregation. The term of service shall be three (3) years, and no Elder may serve more than two (2) consecutive terms. Removal of an Elder shall be by a two-thirds vote of the Elders then in office in accordance with Article III, Section 4.

3. During the first regularly scheduled Elders' meeting after the annual congregational meeting, the Elders will choose from their number a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman and a Secretary, all of whom shall hold such offices at the pleasure of the Board of Elders. The Elders will also appoint a Treasurer who may or may not be an Elder.

4. No officers or Elders of this organization excepting the Pastor and staff, shall be paid any regular salary at any time for their services in such capacity.

5. Any Elder may resign his office at any time; such resignation is to be made in writing, and it shall take effect at the time of its acceptance by the Board of Elders.

6. Regular meetings of the Board of Elders shall be established on a monthly basis. The date of such meetings may be established by the Elders' own choosing. In addition to the monthly meetings, the Board of Elders may meet at any time or any place to transact business without publishing notice of the meeting to the congregation.

7. At all such meetings of the Board of Elders, a majority of all the Elders on the Board must be present before the transaction of Church business is considered legal and acceptable to the congregation. All major

such churches or groups of churches as are in agreement with our doctrinal position. However, this church shall not become a permanent member of such fellowship, but shall retain the right of withdrawing at any time.

ARTICLE XI: AMENDMENT

To alter or repeal any part of this Constitution, it shall be requisite that at two (2) consecutive meetings called specifically for that purpose at least two-thirds of the Elders in office vote in favor of this alteration or repeal. Such alteration or repeal is to be ratified by a simple majority vote of the congregation.

ARTICLE XII: ACQUISITION AND SALE OF PROPERTY

1. Prior to the purchase or sale by Maplewood Church, Inc. of any real estate, a resolution authorizing such action shall be passed by a two-thirds vote of its members present and voting at a regular congregational meeting or special meeting called for that purpose, provided, however, that not less than two (2) weeks' notice of such meeting and proposed action.

2. A resolution authorizing the proposed action shall be passed by a two-thirds vote of the congregation members present.

3. The resolution authorizing such proposed action shall direct that any contract, deed, bill of sale, mortgage or other necessary written instrument be executed by and on behalf of the local church by two (2) officers of the corporation, who thereupon shall be duly authorized to carry out the direction of the quarterly congregational; and any written instrument so executed shall be binding and effective as the action of Maplewood Church.

ARTICLE VIII: RIGHT OF SUFFRAGE

1. Only members of the congregation who are at least sixteen (16) years of age shall have the right of voting. All officers must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age. The offices of Pastor and Elder may only be held by male members (1 Timothy 3:1-2).
2. It shall be the duty of all voting members to attend meetings of the congregation when possible, and in failing to attend a meeting, members waive the right to cast their votes during such a meeting.

ARTICLE IX: ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH

We believe there are only two (2) ordinances of the church: Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

1. We believe every child of God should be baptized as soon as possible after he or she receives Christ as Lord and Saviour because Christ asked to be baptized (Matthew 28:19-20); and because the early Church, as recorded in the Book of Acts, practiced baptism. We believe that there is no saving grace in baptism, but that it is a symbol of the believer's identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection (Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12; 1 Peter 3:21). In accordance with this we believe that immersion is the scriptural mode of baptism.
2. We believe that the Lord's Supper symbolizes our Lord's death and that there is no saving efficacy attached to the partaking of it (1 Corinthians 11:23-29). By partaking of the Lord's Supper, the church reminds itself and the world of the fact that Christ died for our sins and that it is through His blood that all who come unto Him are made heirs of God (1 John 1:7; Romans 8:16).

ARTICLE X: CHURCH AFFILIATION

This church shall be independent of all denominational control and never affiliate with an organization or association which shall in any way seek to direct or control any of its functions. This church shall never join or cooperate with any modernistic, theologically liberal or apostate groups as the National Council of Churches of Christ of America, or the World Council of Churches or its successors, nor shall it be a party of cooperation with any councils or churches which are the expression of these larger bodies. It is desired that this church will hold fellowship with

decisions and business transactions are to be presented to the congregation for approval.

8. The right of calling, accepting or dismissing a Pastor shall be vested in the Board of Elders, upon ratification by the congregation. For either the calling or the dismissal of a Pastor, as two-thirds vote of the Elders shall be required. The Pastor shall be given at least one month's pay from date of dismissal.

ARTICLE VI: DEACONS

1. A Board of Deacons, consisting of not less than three (3) shall be nominated from the membership by the Board of Elders and shall oversee the physical needs of the congregation, the physical church plant and the Trustees. The Board of Deacons derive their authority from, and are responsible to, the Board of Elders (Acts 6:1-5).
2. In matters of election, the Board of Elders shall prepare and present to the church two (2) weeks before the annual congregational meeting a list of nominees, if any, for the office of Deacon. They shall be recognized for their spirituality and leadership qualities (Acts 6:1-5; 1 Timothy 3:8-13). Any person nominated shall become a Deacon after ratification by a simple majority vote of the congregation. The term of service shall be three (3) years and no Deacon may serve more than two (2) consecutive terms. Removal of a Deacon shall be by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Elders, according to Article III, Section 4.
3. During the first regularly scheduled Deacons' meeting after the annual congregational meeting the Board of Deacons shall elect from their number a Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary, thereof, to hold office for a term of one (1) year or until their successor shall be elected.
4. Any Deacon may resign his office at any time. Such resignation is to be made in writing, and it shall take effect at the time of its acceptance by the Board of Elders.
5. The Board of Deacons shall meet at least monthly or at the call of its Chairman, the Chairman of the Board of Elders, or the Pastor. Each member shall be notified five (5) days prior to meeting, if practical.
6. Annual reports shall be made at the annual congregational meeting in October or if requested, at any of the quarterly congregational meetings.

7. The Board of Deacons shall select, appoint and oversee the Trustees, individuals who desire to assist the Deacons in the administration and management of their areas of responsibility.

ARTICLE VII: DUTIES OF OFFICERS

1. Pastor:

He is recognized as the undershepherd of Christ's local Church and its belief officer, and shall preach the Word of God, administer the Ordinance of the Church, shepherd the Church, and lead it in the sacred fulfillment of its task. He shall have the right of attendance at all business meetings and shall be an ex-officio member of all boards and standing committee and counselor of all departments. He shall at all times maintain a Godly deportment, so that no reproach may come through him upon the Body of Christ, or our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

2. Board of Elders:

A. The Chairman shall be the chief executive of the Church. He shall preside at all meetings of the congregation and all meetings of the Elders. He shall have general supervision and direction of the business of the church and shall see that all orders and resolutions of the Board of Elders are carried into effect. He shall sign all instruments of writing required to be executed by the church, in conjunction with the Secretary.

B. The Vice-Chairman shall, in the absence or the incapacity of the Chairman, perform the duties of the Chairman.

C. The Secretary shall keep all the minutes of the Elders' meetings at which he is present and shall have charge of the records and proceedings of the Board of Elders. He shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Elders or the Chairman, under whose supervision he shall be. He shall affix his signature to all documents in writing requiring that the signature of a Secretary be so affixed.

D. Any officer may be removed at any time with just cause by a two-thirds vote of the whole number of the Board of Elders. Upon removal of any such officer, the Board of Elders shall elect any other of their number to fill the vacancy.

3. Board of Deacons:

A. The Chairman shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Deacons. He shall have general supervision and direction of the business of the Board of Deacons and shall see that all orders and resolutions of that Board are carried into effect.

B. The Vice-Chairman shall, in the absence or the incapacity of the Chairman, perform the duties of the Chairman.

C. The Secretary shall keep all the minutes of the Deacons' meetings at which he is present and shall have charge of the records and proceedings of the Board of Deacons. He shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Deacons or the Chairman, under whose supervision he shall be. He shall affix his signature to all documents in writing requiring that the signature of a Secretary be so affixed.

D. Any officer may be removed at any time with just cause by a two-thirds vote of the whole number of the Board of Deacons. Upon removal of any such officer, the Board of Deacons shall elect any other of their number to fill the vacancy.

4. The Treasurer:

The Treasurer shall have custody of the corporate funds and other properties; shall keep a complete and accurate account of receipts and disbursements in books belonging to the Maplewood Church; and shall deposit all monies of their valuable effects in the name and credit of the corporation in such depository as shall be designated by the Board of Elders. He shall disburse the funds of the Maplewood Church as ordered by the Board of Elders and shall render to the Board of Elders, when they may require it, an account of all his transactions and the financial condition of the Maplewood Church.

5. The Church Clerk:

The Church Clerk shall be elected to a one (1) year term and shall keep a complete record of all official acts of the church. This includes keeping a complete and accurate registry of the active, inactive, and erased memberships. The Clerk shall keep the minutes of congregational meetings.

6. The officers of the corporation, where necessity requires, as a result of incorporation, are the Elders.