

Constitution and By-Laws

Maranatha Assembly of God
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PREAMBLE

(a) For the purpose of establishing and maintaining a place for the worship of Almighty God, our Heavenly Father; to provide Christian fellowship for those of the precious faith, where the Holy Ghost may be honored according to our distinctive testimony; to assume our share of responsibility and the privilege of propagating the gospel of Jesus Christ by all available means, both at home and in foreign lands, to provide education with an evangelical Christian perspective for children; we, whose names appear upon the Assembly roster under above date, do hereby recognize ourselves a local Assembly in fellowship with and a part of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, and adopt the following articles of church order and submit ourselves to be governed by them.

(b) It is our desire to be incorporated under the laws of the State of Minnesota, in order that we might hold property and manage our own affairs, give expression to our faith and adopt such rules as may be necessary to conduct business in harmony with the statutes of the State of Minnesota.

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE 1. NAME

The name of this church shall be Maranatha Assembly of God of Forest Lake, Minnesota.

ARTICLE II. PREROGATIVES

Section 1. This Assembly shall have the right to govern itself according to the standards of the New Testament Scriptures, "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace... till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." (Ephesians 4:3, 13).

Section 2. In connection therewith, or incidental thereto, it shall have the right to purchase or acquire by gift, bequest or otherwise, either directly or as trustee, and to own, hold in trust, use, sell, convey, mortgage, lease or otherwise dispose of any real estate or chattels as may be necessary for the furtherance of its purposes; all in accordance with its constitution and by-laws or as the same may be hereafter modified or amended.

ARTICLE III. AFFILIATION

While maintaining its inherent rights to sovereignty in the conduct of its own affairs, this Assembly shall voluntarily enter into full cooperative fellowship with assemblies of like precious faith associated in the Minnesota District Council, and the General Council of the Assemblies of God, with headquarters at Springfield, Missouri; and shall share in the privileges and assume the responsibilities enjoined by that affiliation.

ARTICLE IV. TENETS OF FAITH

(Same as General Council Assemblies of God Statement of Fundamental Truths. See attached booklet.)

ARTICLE V. ORDINANCES

Section 1. The Ordinance of Baptism by immersion in water (Mathew 28:19) shall be administered to all those who have repented of their sins and who have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of their souls, and who give clear evidence of their salvation. (Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12)

Section 2. The Ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed regularly as enjoined in the Scriptures. (Luke 22:19, 20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

ARTICLE VI. OTHER MINISTRIES

Section 1. Infants and children may be dedicated to the Lord upon request. (Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-16)

Section 2. The sick shall be ministered unto according to Mark 16:18; James 5:14.

ARTICLE VII. FINANCES

All funds for the maintenance of the Assembly shall be provided by the voluntary giving of tithes and offerings by the members and friends of the organization. Offerings shall be accepted by the Assembly at such times and in such ways as agreed upon by the Official Board and shall be administered by the Treasurer under their direction. (Malachi 3:10; Luke 6:38, 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8)

ARTICLE VIII. MEMBERSHIP

Persons who give scriptural evidence of saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and voluntarily subscribe to its tenets of faith, and agree to be governed by its Constitution and By-Laws as herein set forth, shall be eligible for membership in this church.

ARTICLE IX. GOVERNMENT AND OFFICERS

Section 1. The officers of the Corporation shall be President, Secretary and Treasurer, who shall by virtue of office be members of the Board of Trustees. Other officers may be added as needed.

Section 2. All matters of church government shall be carried on by the Official Board except in matters affecting the entire body. In such cases they shall present their recommendations to the church for ratification.

Section 3. The Trustees and Deacons shall constitute the Official Board of the church. Provided they qualify, the Trustees and Deacons can be the same individuals.

ARTICLE X. AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended or changed by a two-thirds vote of the membership of the Assembly who are in attendance at any regular or special meeting called for that purpose, provided due notice of such proposed change shall have been made four consecutive Sundays preceding the time of such meeting.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: In an effort to recognize and incorporate those who call Maranatha their “home church,” and to help them feel connected and possess a sense of belonging with others of like faith and values, there shall therefore be two categories of members.

Community Members: Those who have completed the necessary classes to feel in agreement with the assembly, and are committed to regularly attending and participating in the church community life.

Covenant Members: Those community members who want to be held to a higher standard of commitment, accountability, and responsibility, and hence will have the privilege to vote for Board positions and also derive the benefits of a fully-vested member in good standing.

Section 2. Qualifications. Those eligible for Community Membership in this church must:

- a. Be born again. (John 1:12-13; 1 Peter 1:18-25; John 3:3-8).
- b. Be baptized in water by immersion except where deemed physically impossible. (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47-48; Romans 6:4-6).
- c. Give evidence of a consistent Christian life (Romans 6:4; 8:1-4; 13:13-14; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 4:17-32; 5:1-2; John 1:6-7. Careful Christian judgment must always be exercised when participating

in those activities and amusements which liberties when exercised, could become a stumbling block or an offense or an occasion of falling to a weaker Christian or to oneself (Romans 14:1-5; 1 Corinthians 8).

e. Believe in and work to maintain unity and harmony in the Assembly (Romans 15:5-6; Proverbs 6:16-19; Proverbs 11:12, Proverbs 22:10; Proverbs 26:20, 24-26; Romans 16:17-18; Ephesians 4:15-16).

f. Strive to live in a way that reflects the love, joy, peace, hope, and security of a relationship with Christ (Galatians 5:22-23; Matthew 5:14-16; John 15:1-11).

g. Realize that all sins originate in the heart and we must guard our heart against deceitful sins, which often times are not readily visible. God looks at our heart. We must strive to keep our hearts seeking God (Matthew 15:1-20; Psalm 139:23-24; Jeremiah 17:9-10; 1 Samuel 16:7).

h. Contribute regularly to the financial support of this church.

i. Believe in all the tenets of faith as set forth in the Constitution, Article IV.

j. Have completed all membership classes as determined by the church leadership

k. Be at least thirteen years of age showing evidence of a consistent Christian life may be added to the church roster.

Section 3: Qualifications. Those eligible for Covenant Membership in this church must:

Meet the qualifications for Community Membership

Be at least eighteen years old.

Be baptized in the Holy Spirit with the physical evidence of speaking in other tongues or earnestly seeking according to Acts 2:4.

Faithfully contribute to the financial support of this church with tithes and offerings.

Have completed all additional classes required by the church leadership for Covenant Membership.

Be interviewed by a Pastor or Board member, and understand the requirements and expectations of Covenant Members.

Vote annually at the Church Business meeting for Board Members.

h. The Pastor and his wife by virtue of office, shall be considered members of the church they serve during the tenure of their ministry and be accorded all the rights, privileges, as well as responsibilities of said membership.

Section 4. Limitation.

a. Membership

1. There are now among Christian people those who became entangled in their marriage relations in their former lives of sin and who do not see how these matters can be adjusted. We recommend that these people be received into the membership of local assemblies and that their marriage complications be left in the hands of the Lord (1 Corinthians 7:17, 20, 24).

2. We recommend that in no case shall persons be accepted into membership who are known to be living in a common-law state of matrimony.

b. Remarriage. Low standards on marriage and divorce are very hurtful to individuals, to the family, and to the cause of Christ. Therefore, we discourage divorce by all lawful means and teaching. We positively disapprove of Christians getting divorces for any cause except fornication and adultery (Matthew 19:9). Where these exceptional circumstances exist or when a Christian has been divorced by an unbeliever, we recommend that the question of remarriage be resolved by the believer as he walks in the light of God's Word (1 Corinthians 7:15, 27,28).

c. Local Church Leadership. Since the New Testament restricts divorced and remarried believers from the church offices of bishop or elder and deacon, we recommend that this standard be upheld by all our assemblies (Titus 1:5-9; 1 Timothy 3:12). This means that neither candidate nor spouse has a former living companion.

Section 5. Active Membership.

All those who meet the scriptural standards for Covenant membership, whose names appeared on the original membership roll of the Assembly at the time the Assembly was first organized, together with those names which shall be added from time to time, shall constitute the legal voting membership of the Assembly, provided they are eighteen years of age or over, that they regularly attend and take part in the church services, that they are living consistent Christian lives and are in agreement with our distinctive testimony and the requirements in the by-laws for Covenant Membership.

All those who meet the Community Membership requirements shall remain as such, provided that they are thirteen years of age and over, that they regularly attend and take part in church services, that they are living consist, that they are living consistent Christian lives and are in agreement with our distinctive testimony and the requirements in the by-laws for Community Membership.

Section 6. Inactive Membership.

Covenant Members who shall without good cause absent themselves from the services of the Assembly for a period of three consecutive months or more, who cease to contribute of their means to its support shall be considered as Community Members until they can once again resume their service, participation and contribution as they pledged to do. At which point they may be eligible to be again considered Covenant Members as reviewed by the Assembly's leadership, and can have their voting privileges restored.

Community Members who shall without good cause absent themselves from the services of the Assembly for a period of three consecutive months or more, who cease to contribute of their means to its support shall have their membership suspended and shall be considered "inactive" until they can once again resume their service, participation and contribution as they pledged to do. At which point they may be eligible to be again considered Community Members as reviewed by the Assembly's leadership.

Covenant and Community Members who may be out of harmony with its teachings or its ministries, or who shall be under charges for misconduct, or who may have fallen under condemnation through sinful or worldly practices, shall be considered as inactive members and shall lose all unique membership privileges until they are restored to the fellowship, their standing to be settled by the definite action of the Assembly through its leadership. If restoration is not possible, then membership shall be terminated.

Section 5. Honorary Membership.

Shall consist of those members who have entered into the ministry either as District Officers, Pastors, Evangelists, Missionaries, Religious Educators, etc.; together with those who are serving in the armed forces or attending college away from home which makes it impossible to serve as active members; also shut-ins and members in good standing who have moved from the area. Honorary membership shall continue as long as the members maintain a cooperative attitude toward the home Assembly. Voting privileges may be granted at the discretion of the Assembly through its elected officers.

Section 6. Reception of Members.

- a. Persons desiring to become active members of the Assembly shall make the fact known to the Pastor, who shall examine the applicant according to the standard for membership.
- b. The Pastor shall present the names of those who apply for membership with his recommendation to the Board of Trustees, who shall act upon said recommendation and render a final decision. All persons who shall have met the membership requirements and have been passed on favorably shall be received into the Assembly publicly at any of the regular services and names inscribed on the roster.
- c. It is recommended that reception of members from other Assemblies of God Churches include letter of transfer as well as a thorough understanding of Maranatha's distinctive ministry philosophy, and an interview by a Board Member or Pastoral Staff member.

Section 7. Discipline of Members.

- a. Any member of the Assembly who shall willfully absent himself from the regular services for a period of three consecutive months, unless his name is retained by special request, or who shall be under charges, shall be temporarily suspended from active voting membership pending investigation and final decision in his case.
- b. Un-scriptural conduct or doctrinal departure from the tenets of faith held by this Assembly shall be considered sufficient grounds upon which any person may be disqualified as a member (Matthew 18:15-18; Romans 16:17, 18; 1 Corinthians 5:11; Galatians 1:8, 9; Titus 3:1-15).
- c. If any member of this church shall, in the opinion of the Official Board, fall below the standard of membership as stated above in faith or practice, his membership in this church shall be terminated and his name be removed from the membership list. It is understood that no such action shall be taken unless and until patient and persistent effort shall have been made to win such individual back to the standard of faith and conduct of this church.

Section 8. Revision of Membership Roll.

The Pastor and Official Board shall be authorized to revise the membership roll of the Assembly periodically and to change the status of Covenant Members to Community Members, to promote Community Members to Covenant Member status, and to remove from the list of active members all names of those who may have become deceased during the year, together with the names of those who may have withdrawn from the fellowship, or who may have fallen into sin and whose lives may have become inconsistent with the standards and teachings of the Assembly. If a name is removed for cause the one whose name is removed shall be notified of the action of the Pastor and Official Board through the Secretary.

Section 9. Transfer or Withdrawal.

Members in good standing, who may wish to sever their relationship with the Assembly, may apply for a letter of transfer or withdrawal signed by the Pastor and Secretary. Such letter shall be granted upon request and shall be addressed to the Pastor and Secretary of the receiving church and shall state whether the member is in good standing in the local Assembly or not. If he is not in good standing, reasons for his unfavorable rating shall be indicated.

ARTICLE II. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. Pastor.

- a. Qualifications: The Pastor shall be a member in good standing with the General Council and/or the District Council of the Assemblies of God and shall comply with the Scriptural and Assemblies of God standards for the ministry (1 Timothy 3: 2-7; Titus 1:6-9; 1 Peter 5:2-3).

b. Duties: the Assembly finds its headship under the Lord Jesus Christ, in its Pastor. He should be honored in his sacred office, as the spiritual overseer of the Assembly, and shall be general supervisor of all of its activities. He shall be the president of the corporation and shall act as chairman of all the business meetings of the Assembly and of the Board. He shall be an ex-officio member of all committees and departments. He shall provide for all the services of the Assembly and shall arrange for all special meetings, giving due regard to the Assembly. No person shall be invited to speak or preach in the Assembly without his approval.

Section 2. Pastor's Assistants.

a. Definition: Assistant Pastor, Youth Pastor, Minister of Christian Education, Minister of Music, etc.

b. Qualifications: the Pastor's Assistants shall have the same qualifications as the Pastor as set forth in Section 1(a).

c. Duties: The Assembly shall honor the assistant in his assignment of duties as given by the Pastor and Official Board.

Section 3. Elders.

a. Qualifications: The Elders shall be persons full of faith and the Holy Spirit whose lives and conduct shall conform as closely as possible to follow Scriptures (Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:8-13). Elders shall be at least 21 years of age and a member of the Assembly for at least twelve months.

b. Number of Elders: Shall be determined by the senior Pastor.

c. Duties: The Elders shall act in an advisory capacity with the Pastor in all matters pertaining to the Assembly in its spiritual life and in the ministry of its ordinances. They are not a legislative body but are for counsel and mutual assistance in the administration of the business and work of the Assembly. They shall act in the examination of applicants for membership, also in the administration of the discipline of the Assembly.

Section 4. Trustees.

a. Qualifications: The Trustees shall be persons full of faith and the Holy Spirit whose lives and conduct shall conform as closely as possible to follow Scriptures (Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:8-13). Members of the Official Board shall be at least 21 years of age and a member of the Assembly for at least 12 months.

b. Duties: The Trustees shall be custodians of all property of the Assembly and shall be responsible for the maintenance and the cleanliness of the same, and for the comfort of the congregation. The Trustees shall serve the church in the selling or acquiring of property, as outlined in Article VI on property. In the event the Assembly is temporarily without a Pastor, the Trustees shall be empowered to provide for their own chairman from the membership in order to transact business for the Assembly.

Section 5. Secretary.

a. Qualifications: Should be one having clerical ability, faithfulness in character, and possessing a spirit of hearty cooperation.

b. Duties: The secretary shall by virtue of office be a member of the board. This person shall keep the minutes of the official meetings of the Board and also the annual and special meetings of the church. He/she shall keep a record of the membership of the church and perform any other clerical work necessary to the proper discharge of his/her duties. He/she shall have charge of all legal documents.

Section 6. Treasurer.

a. Qualifications: Should be one having clerical ability, faithfulness in character, and possessing a spirit of hearty cooperation. If such is not available with clerical and bookkeeping experience, a financial secretary may be appointed by the board.

b. Duties: The treasurer shall by virtue of office be a member of the Official Board. He/she shall keep an itemized account of the receipts and disbursements of all moneys received. He/she shall make an itemized statement at the regular meetings of the Board of Trustees, and a summarized statement at the church's annual meetings. Other treasurers maybe appointed for special funds.

ARTICLE III. VACANCIES AND ELECTIONS

Section 1. The Pastorate.

a. Elections: When there is a vacancy in the Pastorate, the Official Board shall act as a nominating committee, and may receive nominations for Pastors from any member of the Assembly, and after careful and prayerful consideration, shall present one name to the church to be balloted upon. In the event that said nominee fails to receive two-thirds of the votes cast, the Official Board may present successive nominees to be balloted upon separately. Only one nominee shall be considered in any one business meeting.

The Pastor shall be chosen by the church at the annual or special meeting called for that purpose. If he receives two thirds of the votes cast he shall be considered elected. All nominations and elections shall be by secret ballot.

b. Term of Office: The first term of office shall be for one year. At the expiration of the first term of office, an election shall be held to determine if he shall continue to serve. He shall be elected for an indefinite period of time if he carries a majority vote of the votes cast. In case the Pastor is not reelected to office, he shall be given sixty days time in which to secure another Pastorate.

c. Vacancies: A vacancy in the Pastorate shall be supplied under the supervision of the Board until a Pastor is elected by the church. The Board may seek the counsel and help of District Officials.

d. Discipline: If at any time a situation should arise, where, due to unscriptural conduct, a change of doctrinal views, or inefficiency, a Pastor can no longer serve the church acceptably, it shall be the duty of the Official Board, upon exercise of the right of initiative by the Assembly, to call a special meeting of the church, duly announced at two consecutive Sundays. By a two-thirds majority vote of the legal voting membership present at such a meeting, a Pastor's office may be declared vacant.

e. Such action on the part of the church is not to be considered as affecting the standing of the Pastor with the General Council fellowship.

Section 2. Pastor's Assistants

Appointment: The Pastor's Assistants shall be appointed by the Pastor with the approval of the Official Board.

Section 3. Elders.

a. Elections: The Board of Elders shall be appointed by the Pastor.

b. Term of Office: The appointment shall be for one year and may be re-appointed annually for an indefinite period.

Section 4. Trustees.

a. Elections: The Board of Trustees shall be elected by a majority of votes cast at the annual or special meeting called for that purpose.

b. Term of Office: The first term of office shall be for one year. At the expiration of the first term of office, an election shall be held to determine if he/she shall continue to serve. He/she shall be elected for a one, two, or three year term. The length of the term shall be arranged so that no more than one-half of the terms shall expire each year. At the expiration of the second term of office (be it one, two, or three years) any subsequent terms of office shall be for three years.

c. Vacancies: Vacancies of the Board of Trustees shall be filled by action of the Assembly at its annual or special meeting called for that purpose. Vacancies in any office in the church may be declared by action of the church whenever the incumbent has disqualified himself by unscriptural conduct, by a spirit of insubordination, or by a change in belief contrary to the articles of faith, herein, according to the plan outlines and stated in the case of the Pastor.

Section 5. Secretary and Treasurer.

a. Elections: The offices of the church Secretary and Treasurer shall be filled from the members of the Official Board by a majority vote at the first meeting of the Official Board following the annual meeting.

b. Term of Office: The term of office shall be for one year.

ARTICLE IV. FINANCES

Section 1. The church shall be financed by the scriptural system of tithes and offerings of its members. All finances shall be passed through the hands of a treasurer & be accounted for. (Mal 3:10, Luke 6:38, 1 Corinthians 16:1-2.)

Section 2. The Pastor and Pastor's Assistants shall be given adequate support according to his needs, at the discretion of the Official Board. Salaries shall be reviewed annually by the Official Board.

Section 3. This church shall send 20% of its World Missionary Monies to the Minnesota District Home Missions office, and shall send the remaining 80% to Springfield, Missouri, to be divided as follows: 70% to Foreign Missions, 5% to Foreign Missions Department Expenses, and 5% to National Home Missions.

ARTICLE V. DEPARTMENTS

Section 1. There shall be a Sunday School department. There shall be a Young People's department. Other departments may be added as needed. They are to be governed by their own Constitution and By-Laws approved by the Church Board.

ARTICLE VI. PROPERTY

Section 1. The Board of Trustees shall have the oversight of all real, or personal property of the church.

Section 2. All property, real or personal, of the church shall be taken, held, sold, transferred, assigned, or conveyed by the Trustees in its corporate name.

Section 3. No real property of the church shall be sold, leased, mortgaged, or otherwise alienated without the same shall have first been recommended by a vote of at least two-thirds of the voting membership of the church being present at a regular or special meeting of the church duly called for that purpose. "The Pastor and Secretary of the church shall certify in such conveyance, lease, or mortgage, that the same has been duly authorized by resolution of the church adopted by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a meeting thereof called for that purpose. Notice of the time and place and object of which, shall be given for at least four successive Sundays immediately preceding said meeting. Such certificate shall be held to be conclusive evidence thereof" (Quotation from State Statutes.) The District Council recommends that the services of a reputable attorney be secured in all matters affecting the title of real estate.

Section 4. The deed shall read " (full name) and full name), and (full name), trustees of the (church name) of (city and state) and to their successors in office."

Section 5. Personal property of the church shall be sold, leased, or mortgaged or otherwise assigned or transferred by the proper officers of the Board, when duly authorized by the church.

Section 6. In case of division, church property shall belong to the members holding to the original articles of faith regardless of majority.

Section 7. In case the congregation should cease to exist as a church body, and ceases to use their property for church purposes, then the property is to revert to and become the property of the Executive Committee of the Minnesota District Council of the Assemblies of God, an incorporated religious body, with headquarters in Minneapolis, Minnesota, with full authority to sell this property, or use it in any way they see fit, for the cause of Christ.

ARTICLE VII. OFFICIAL MEETINGS

Section 1. The annual business meeting of the church shall be held the last Monday of February. Sufficient time, after close of the fiscal year, should be given the Treasurer to prepare a financial report for the annual meeting, at which time the election of officers shall take place. Said meeting shall convene at such time and place as the Official Board may decide, and of which due notice shall be given at any of the regular meetings or by publication as prescribed by law.

Section 2. The Board shall meet at appointed times each month. More meetings may be called. This shall be known as the regular monthly business meeting of the Official Board of Trustees.

Section 3. A special meeting of the church may be called by the Pastor, the Board or any ten members of the church who sign a petition and place the same in the hands of the Pastor. Due notice of all special business meetings of the church shall be given at least two Sundays before date of said meeting, except as otherwise provided, and public announcement of the same shall be made from the platform.

Section 4. The business of the church shall be decided by a necessary majority of the voting members present at any of its regular or special meetings, except as herein provided.

Section 5. A majority of the Official Board being present at any of their monthly or special meetings shall be considered a quorum.

Section 6. No one, or any number of persons, shall conduct any private or secret business or devotional meetings without the consent and knowledge of the Pastor and Official Board.

Section 7. The active voting members of the church present at a business meeting shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE VIII. RELATIONSHIP

This church being sovereign in all its business and local affairs, shall be in cooperative fellowship with the General Council and Minnesota District Council of the Assemblies of God, with the privilege of representation in all District affairs, and shall endeavor to perform its part in supporting the work of the District Council. It shall have the right to representation at meetings of the General Council or District Council by a delegate appointed by the Official Board or Pastor.

ARTICLE IX. GOVERNMENT

We recognize that government is of God, and the powers that be are ordained of the Lord as ministers of good to be governed, according to Romans 13:1-7.

ARTICLE X. AMENDMENTS

The By-laws may be amended at any regular or special business meeting of the Assembly by a majority vote of the membership present.