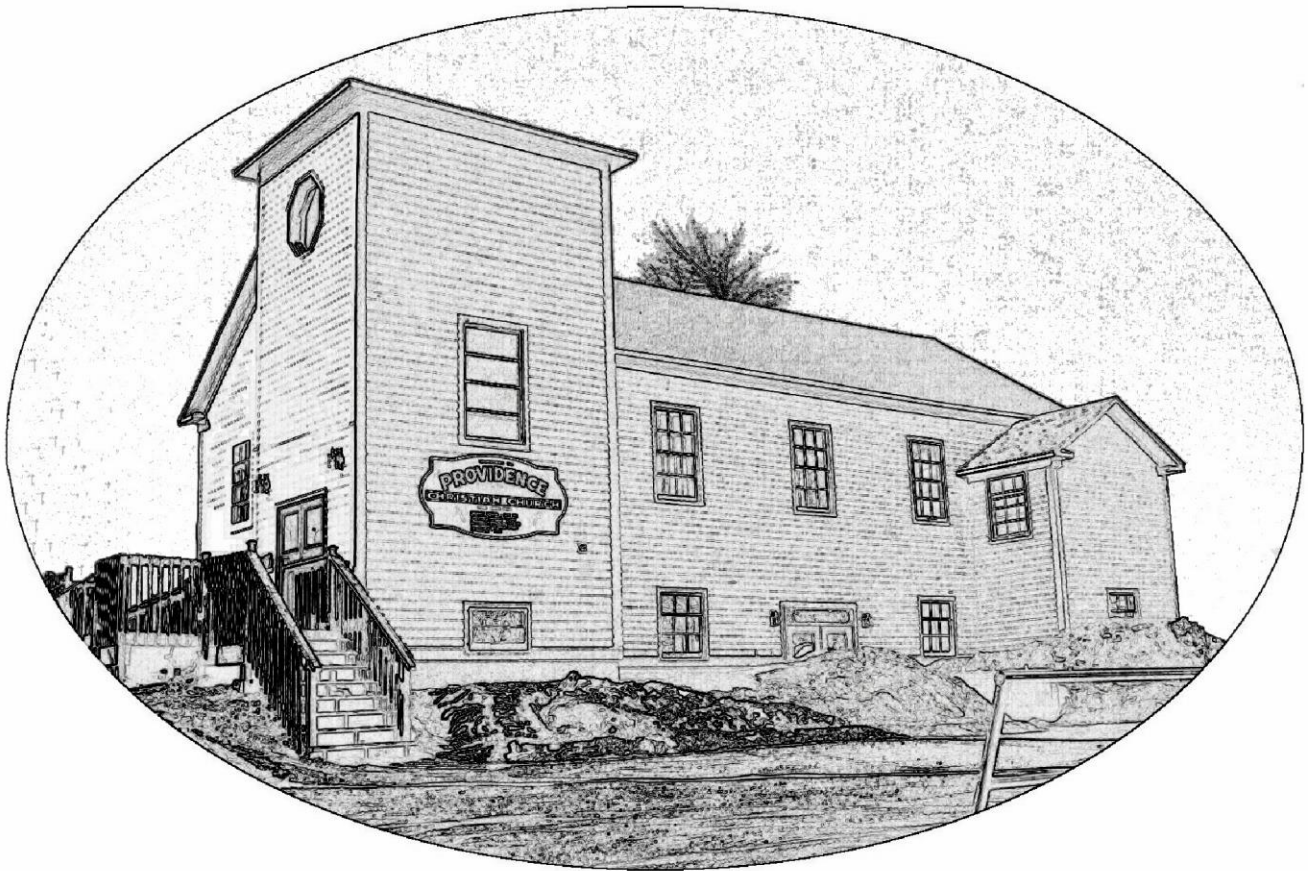


# Constitution of Providence Christian Church



105 Howard Ave  
Riverview, NB  
E1B 1L8

## Article 1 - Name

The official name of this church is Providence Christian Church

## Article 2 - Purpose

The purpose of this church is the glorification of God, accomplished by adhering to the Word of God as the only guide for faith and practice. This includes, but is not limited to the worship of God, the edification of the saints, the evangelization of unbelievers and the expression of Christian benevolence to the needy. (*Eph.3:21; 2Tim.3:15; John4:23,24; Heb.13:15,16; 1Pet.2:5; 1Cor.12:27,28; 1Cor.14:12,26; Eph.4:11-16; Matt.28:19; Acts 13&14; 1Tim2:1-4; Rom.15:26; Gal.2:10; 6:10; Jam.1:27*)

## Article 3 - What We Believe

The ultimate authority in all matters of faith and practice is the Bible alone. We adopt the Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689 as an accurate summary of what we believe the Bible teaches. This is not an inspired document but is helpful for assistance in controversy, confirmation in faith and edification in righteousness.

## Article 4 - Church Affiliation

This church will seek to cooperate with other like-minded churches in matters of mutual interest and concern. Although we have no formal alliance, we will seek the assistance, counsel and edification of other churches in matters of special importance and concern to us. However no decision of any other church, group of churches, or council shall ever be binding on this church. (*2Cor.8:18-24; 1Cor.16:1,2; Prov.11:14; 1Thes.2:14; Phi.4:15; 1Tim.2:5; Acts13:2; 1Tim.5:21*)

## Article 5 - Church Membership

### SECTION 1 - Membership Qualifications:

Any person desiring membership must profess repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, manifest a transformed life, be baptized upon profession of faith, agree with the constitution of this church and support its ministries, leaders and discipline. (*Acts2:37-42; Acts5:14; Acts8:12; 16:30-34; 20:21; 1Cor.6:9-11; Gal.5:19-25; 1Thes.1:1-19; 2Tim2:19; Matt.28:18-20; Acts2:41; 8:12, 35-39; 16:31-34; 18:8; 1Cor.1:10; 14:40; 2Cor.8:5; 1Thes.5:12-14; Acts2:42; Heb.13:17; Matt.18:15-18*)

### SECTION 2 - Procedures for Membership:

At least two (2) elders will interview the applicant and report to the rest of the elders. If the requirements for membership have been satisfied, the elders will communicate this to the church body. A period of 1 week will be allowed for objections or questions to be brought privately to the elders concerning the applicant. These will be investigated and resolved to the satisfaction of the elders prior to the acceptance into membership of the applicant. If there are no objections the applicant will be publicly received into membership on the next celebration of the Lord's Supper. (*Acts9:26,27; 10:47,48;*

11:2-23; 1Tim.6:12; Rom.15:7)

### SECTION 3 -Official Membership:

In the stated meeting of the church at which a person is to be received into membership, he/she shall be asked verbally to affirm his/her commitment to Christ, to the essentials of the Confession and the Constitution of this church, and the members of the congregation shall be asked to express their consent to his/her reception. When congregational consent is given, the person is officially received into the membership. (*Rom.15:7; Gal.6:9*)

### SECTION 4 -Membership Responsibilities:

- a) Members of Providence Christian Church are expected to attend all the various meetings of the church unless providentially hindered (by illness, accident, unusual working conditions, attending to children, family emergencies, other ministry obligations, and other such circumstances). Members are expected to attend Lord's Day services in a Christ honouring church when away for vacation of other reasons that would require them to be away from the area. (*Acts2:42; Heb.10:24,25*)
- b) It is the responsibility of every member to contribute to the maintenance of the doctrinal purity and unity of the congregation. In pursuit of these goals, all members are strongly urged to read the Confession and Constitution of the church at least once a year in order to maintain awareness to our commonly held standards of doctrine and practice. In addition, the elders will teach through the Confession at least once every five (5) years, beginning five years from the adoption of this Constitution. (*Eph.4:1-6,13,15; Amos3:3; 1Cor.1:10;Col.2:5*)
- c) Since it is clearly taught in Scripture that Christians are to give financial support to the work of the Lord, all members are to give proportionally, regularly, and cheerfully to Providence Christian Church. Giving is according to one's ability and willingness of heart. The Elders strongly recommend tithing. (*Prov.3:9,10; Mal.3:8-10; Matt.23:23; 1Cor.9:14; 16:1,2; 2Cor.8&9; Phil.4:14-19*)
- d) As the church is represented in scripture as a body, each member must actively strive to cultivate acquaintance with one another and mutual transparency and honesty so that they may be better able to pray for, love, comfort, and encourage one another. Members are to help one another materially, as necessity may require (this may be done through the deacons or individually), and to fulfil basic Christian responsibilities such as: discreetly confessing their sin to one another, faithfully admonishing and exhorting one another, refraining from all backbiting and gossip, and keeping in strict confidence all matters which the elders determine are private concerns of the church. (*1Cor.12:12-27; Eph.4:4,11-16,25; 6:18; 1John4:20,21; 1Thes.4:18; Gal.6:10; 1John3:16-18; James5:16; Matt.18:15,16; 1Thes.5:14; Heb.3:12,13; 10:24,25;Ps.15:3; Prov.16:28; 26:20-22; Prov.11:13*)
- e) All members are expected to support and submit to the overseers of the church. Supporting them includes praying for them and their labours, loving them, esteeming them highly for their works sake, assisting them, and defending them. Submitting to them includes imitating their godly faith and practice as they imitate Christ; receiving their teaching with all readiness of mind and a teachable spirit (yet with your ultimate allegiance to the Word of God); humbly heeding to their scriptural rebukes and warnings as they are appointed to watch over the souls of the members and must give an account; seeking and carefully considering their counsel; and cheerfully embracing and abiding by their decisions regarding the oversight of God's house, which is His Church. (*Rom.15:30-32; Eph.6:18,19; 1Thes.5:12,13; 2Tim.1:15-18; Rom.15:23,24; Phi.4:15,16; Acts23:5; 1Tim.5:19;*

*1Cor.11:1; Heb.13:7; 1Pet.5:3; Acts17:11; Jam.1:19-21; 1Thes.2:13; Col.1:28; 1Cor.7:25; 1Tim.3:5,15; Heb.13:17; Rom.10:21; 1Cor.10:10; Phi.2:14; Jude11)*

f) All members are expected to practice and cultivate godliness in all areas of life, including: personal devotion to God, family life, personal evangelism, Christian liberty and separation from the world.

Personal devotion to God includes:

1. Walking personally with the Lord, daily secret prayer, daily reading and meditating on His Word, and periodic and prayerful self-examination by the standard of God's Word. (*Gen5:24; Matt.6:6,10; Ps55:17; Dan.6:10; Col.4:2; 1Thes.4:17*)
2. In family life, members are expected to obey the teachings of Scripture that apply to the home. The husband, as the God-appointed head of the family must seek to lead his household with gentleness and love but also with wisdom and firmness. The wife must seek to nurture the children in the chastening and admonition of the Lord by setting a good example before them; by leading them in regular family worship; by instructing them consistently in the Scripture; by praying for them; and by wise, firm and consistent discipline, including the biblical use of the rod without excessive force. (*Eph.5:22-33; 1Tim.3:4,5; 1Pet.3:1ff; Eph.6:1-4; Gen.18:19; Deut.6:7-9; 1Chro.29:18,19; Prov.13:24; 22:15; 29:15; Heb.12:7*)
3. Personal evangelism is the duty of every member. Each member should pray and labour according to his or her God-given ability and opportunity for the extension of the Kingdom of God both at home and to the ends of the earth. (*Rom.12:6; Acts1:8; Matt.10:32,33; Rom.1:16,17; 9:1-3; 10:1; 2Cor.5:18-20; Phil2:14-16; 1Pet.3:14-16*)
4. If God has not condemned or forbidden a practice in the scriptures a Christian is at liberty to participate in it. The exercise of Christian liberty, however, must be governed at all times by an earnest desire to walk in the fear of the Lord and to glorify Him in all things, a loving regard for the consciences of weaker brethren, a compassion for the lost, and a zealous regard for the health of one's own soul. (*Rom.8:3,4; 1Pet.1:17; 1Cor.10:31; 1Cor.8:9-13; Rom.15:1-3; 1Cor.9:19-10:13; Rom.13:14; 1Pet.2:16*)
5. Each member is expected to separate from the attitudes, practices and unwholesome influences of the world. Specifically, members are expected not to indulge in any of the world's vices, such as drunkenness, drug abuse, gluttony, fornication, homosexuality, viewing, reading or listening to pornography, and all other forms of uncleanness and shameful deeds. Members are also expected to refrain from all entangling relationships with the ungodly, such as intimate, frequent companionship with them; pursuing romantic interests in them; and contracting marriages with them. (*Gal.5:13; 1Pet.2:16; Lev.18:1-30; Tit.2:11-14; 3:3; 1Pet.1:14,15; Ps.139:19-22; Jam.4:4; 1Jo.2:15; Eph.4:17-5:12; 1Pet.4:3,4; Prov.1:10-19; Jam.1:27*)

## SECTION 5 -Termination of Membership:

Official membership will be terminated by: death, transfer, resignation and excommunication.

*(Heb.12:23; Acts18:27; Jud.3; Heb.13:27; Acts15:24; 1Jo.18,19; 2Jo.7-11; Num.30:2; Deut.23:21-23; Mt.5:27; Mt.21:28-31; 23:3; 2Tim.2:24-26; Mt.18:15; Rom.16:17-20; 1Cor.5:1ff; Tit.3:10,11)*

## Article 6 - Church Discipline

### SECTION 1 - Purpose Of:

(The reason for the exercise of church discipline). Every disciple of Christ must be under His discipline, which is administered to each one personally and through the church. Mutual submission to one another and the overseers whom the Lord has appointed over His church will result in the unity and sanctification of the whole body. (*Act5:1-11; 1Cor.11:30-32; 1Thes.4:6; Heb.12:5-11; Rev.2:22,23; 1Cor.12:12-27; Eph.4:11-15; Gal.6:1; 1Thes.5:14; Heb.3:12-14; 12:15; Eph.5:21; Heb.13:17; 1Pet.5:5*)

### SECTION 2 - Corrective Discipline:

Corrective discipline becomes necessary, when either heretical doctrine, disorderly, immoral, or scandalous conduct is discovered within the membership of the church. As a general rule, efforts must be made toward the offending party to bring them to repentance through private counsel, admonition, and restriction of certain privileges by the elders before more serious steps are taken. The principles given to us in the scriptures should be appropriately applied to each case as it is warranted.

Since the church is under the rule of scripture, its disciplinary action must be in accord with the direction of scripture. These actions include public verbal reproof, social avoidance, and withdrawal of Christian fellowship. The purpose of these actions is to bring glory to God, maintain purity in the church, and the spiritual restoration of the offender through godly repentance of sins. (*Gal.6:1; Jam5:19-20; Matt.18:15-17; Rom.16:17-20; 1Cor.5:1-13; 2Thes.3:6-15; 1Tim.5:19,20; Tit.3:10; 2Cor.2:6,7; Acts4:29; 25:11; 1Pet.4:15*)

### SECTION 3 - Public Reproof:

This is a pastoral effort before the gathered church, to call an impenitent member to repentance for sin too serious to be covered with a blanket of love. The elders may administer such censures whenever public misconduct, patterns of sin, or serious doctrinal error would threaten the unity and peace of the church. Those who then own and confess their sins will be publicly commended for their godly repentance. (*1Pet.4:8; Gal.2:11-14; 1Tim.5:20; Tit.1:10-13; Pro.28:13; 2Cor.7:7-11*)

### SECTION 4 - Suspension of Privileges:

Some misconduct by a member is so detrimental to the holiness and unity of the church, that public reproof needs to be accompanied by suspension of privileges accordingly to the gravity of the offence. A suspended member is still to be regarded as a brother in Christ and a member of the church and not cut off from Christian fellowship.

In accordance with the procedures for the categories of offences, the elders shall at a regular or specially called meeting of the congregation, recommend to the congregation that the offending member be suspended, specifying the grounds for discipline and the privileges to be revoked. To be valid, the act of suspension must have the approval of 3/4 of the members present and voting. The elders, at their discretion, may impose a temporary suspension during the brief interval between suspension recommendation and the congregational vote. If a member is suspended, he or she ought to be treated according to the general principal of social avoidance by members of the congregation. Those who humbly submit to this discipline, and manifest repentance, shall be forgiven, have their privileges



restored, and be received back into full fellowship upon congregational consent. (*Rom.16:17-20; 2The.3:6-15; Matt.18:17,18*)

The major categories that require suspension are as follows:

1. Unresolved private offence - When a private offence is not handled in a prayerful manner prescribed by our Lord, it is then an aggravated offence. The offended brother shall bring the matter to the elders, and if they cannot persuade the offending brother to repent, they shall report the offence to the church, and recommend the offending brother's suspension. (*Matt.18:15-17*)
2. Divisive teaching or behaviour - When a member persists in serious doctrinal error contrary to Scripture, and our Confession of Faith, or attempts to sow discord among the membership, he may be suspended as a divisive man. Every member is responsible to disclose, reprove, or if necessary disclose to the elders any divisive behaviour. Upon awareness of such behaviour the elders are to confront it according to the Word of God. If a member continues in this behaviour after admonition from the elders, the situation shall be reported to the church, and the member be recommended for suspension. (*Rom.16:17,18; Tit.3:10,11; Eph.4:1-3; 1Cor.1:10,11*)
3. Disorderly behaviour - When a member persists in conduct displaying a flagrant disregard for the teaching of God's word regarding sinful behaviour, he/she may be suspended as a disorderly member. If after admonition from the elders, such a one continues in disorderly behaviours, the elders shall report it to the church and recommend suspension. (*2Thes.3:6-15; Gen.2:1-3,15-24; Exo.20:8-11; 1Cor.7:1-17,39; 1Tim.1:8; Tit.2:5; Rom.13:1-7; 1Pet.2:13-17; 1Thes.5:14*)
4. Scandalous sin which is followed by repentance - If a member has sinned scandalously but show signs of repentance and submission to the admonition of the elders, suspension may still be necessary for some time, in order not to bring reproach on the name of Christ and the church. This is to prevent others from like sins, and to teach the offender as to the gravity of the offence. (*Rom.2:24; 1Tim.5:20; 2Cor.13:5; Matt.8:17*)

## SECTION 5 - Excommunication:

When a church member's conduct is immoral and the member remains unrepentant of such conduct, such a one should be cut off from fellowship from the church. The elders should make every effort to bring such an offender to true repentance and reformation. Likewise any member holding to heretical doctrine which is a damnable heresy or any member under suspension who continues in their sin may also be excommunicated. The elder shall report any such cases to the congregation at a regular or specially called business meeting of the church. To be valid, an act of excommunication must have approval of 75% of the members present and voting. (*1Cor.5:3-11; 6:9-11; Matt.18:17; 1Cor.5:4; Gal.1:6-9; 2Thes.2:11,12; 1Tim.4:1; Tit.3:10*)

## Article 7 - Church Ordinances

**General Statement** - According to scripture, there are two (2) ordinances that the Lord has commanded for us to observe. They are baptism and the Lord's Supper. Neither of these ordinances has any power to save anyone, nor is grace imputed to the recipient of the water of baptism, or the bread and cup of the Supper. However, they are means of grace and aids of the faith to all who properly partake of them. (*Acts8:13, 18-24; 1Cor.11:20, 27-30; Lk.23:32-43*)

**Baptism** - An ordinance of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ as a sign of fellowship with Him in His death, burial and resurrection. Only those who profess repentance toward God, faith in, and obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ are proper candidates of this ordinance. Baptism being the sign of entrance into the body of Christ, we will therefore receive into church membership only those who have been baptized by water immersion, and in the name of the Father, the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. (*Acts2:38; Acts8:38,39; Col.2:12; Matt.28:19*)

**The Lord's Supper** - This Supper, which was instituted by the Lord Jesus on the night he was betrayed, and to be observe by the church as a proclamation of his death until he comes. It is then the Lord's will that all who would be brought under the government of His church should partake of the privileges of the church. We welcome all to participate with us in the Lord's Supper who are believers in the Lord Jesus, and who are in good standing of a church holding to the essential doctrine and discipline of historic Protestantism. Worthy receivers who partake of the visible elements in this ordinance, though they remain only symbols of the body and blood of the Lord, yet they are of great spiritual benefit to those who receive them by faith and with solemn joy. (*Acts2:41,42; 1Cor.11:26; 1Cor.10:16,17; 12:27,28; Col.1:18*)

## Article 8 - Church Officers

### SECTION 1 - Foundational Principles:

Jesus Christ alone is the head of the church, and He governs His church through officers whom He appoints and who are given the gifts and graces needed for their service by the Holy Spirit. Christ appointed officers have authority, which is limited by Him in the scriptures. There are two (2) kinds of church officers, elders and deacons. It is the duty of the church to seek to discover among its members those to whom Christ the Lord has imparted the graces and gifts necessary for office and after formally recognizing them by the voting process, to set them apart by united prayer. Church officers are not exempt from church discipline, but on the contrary, their office obliges them to adhere to a more rigorous standard of conduct than other members. (*Eph.5:23; Col1:18; Acts20:28; Eph.4:11; 1Tim.3:1-13; 2Cor.13:10; 1Cor.14:36-38; 2Tim.3:16,17; Phil.1:1; 1Pet.5:2; Heb.13:17,24*)

### SECTION 2 - Elders:

**Paragraph A. Ground, Sphere, and Limit of their Authority.** The elders are always bound to discharge the duties of their office by the Scriptures, which are infallible and unchanging rule of faith and practice in the church. Because the Scriptures are authoritative, insofar as the instruction of the elders is in accord with the Scriptures, that instruction carries with it authority in the church. On matters that Scripture gives no regulative word, elders must exercise their authority in subjection to the general Scriptural principles of Christian liberty. The eldership, as a body, is authorized and responsible to give comprehensive oversight to the church, including the preaching and teaching of the whole counsel of God, watching out for the authority with sensitivity to the congregation and in the posture of servants and examples to them. The elders should carefully consider congregational input when the interests of the church are involved. They may not impose officers on the church without congregational support, nor may they excommunicate any member without action by the congregation. Congregational approval is also required for any change to this Constitution and for receiving or excluding members. (*Col.1:18; 2Tim3:16,17; Matt.28:20; 2Thes.2:15; 1Tim.3:14,15; 4:11; 1Cor.14:36-38; Lk.10:16; 1Cor.11:13,14;*

14:40; Acts20:20-28; 1Pet.5:1-3; Tit.1:9; Eph.4:11-13; Col.1:28; 1Thes.2:11; Heb.13:17; 1Tim.3:4,5; Acts6:5; Matt.20:25-28; Acts19:30; 21:11-14; Acts6:3-6; Matt.18:17; 2Thes.3:14)

**Paragraph B. Plurality and Diversity of Elders.** The scriptures teach that normally there should be a plurality of elders in each local church. Therefore the church should seek to discover and then formally to recognize all the **men** whom the Holy Spirit has endowed with the requisite graces and gifts. The elders are equal in office and authority, but diverse in gift and function. Each elder must be able to teach and must be engaged in the administration and government of the church. However, some elders will be more gifted by God, more experienced, more involved, and more proficient than others in executing various dimensions of the pastoral office. For example, some should be more engaged in public preaching and teaching and oversight of the church as his calling in life. The church is responsible to give adequate financial compensation, according to its ability and according to the evidence of a man's gift, extent of his service and his needs. (Acts14:23; 20:17; Phil.1:1; Tit.1:5,9; 1Tim5:22; 1Tim.3:1ff; Matt.9:37,38; Acts20:28; Heb.13:17; 1Thes5:12; 1Tim5:17; Rom.12:3-8; 1Cor.12:4-7; 1Cor.9:14; Prov.3:27)

**Paragraph C. Number of Elders and Length of Term.** The number of elders should not be fixed and all who have been confirmed by the congregation may continue in office as long as they remain qualified, able, willing to serve, and hold the confidence of the congregation. (1Pet.5:2)

**Paragraph D. Qualification of Elders.** The general qualifications for an elder are clearly set forth in Scripture, particularly in 1Tim.3:1-7 and Titus1:5-9. Any **man** called to this office must be able conscientiously to affirm his agreement with our Confession of Faith and his submission to the Constitution of the church. Should **he** at any time change his convictions respecting these standards, **he** is under moral obligation to make this fact known to the church.

To help the eldership function in an orderly and efficient manner, the elders shall choose a chairman and a vice-chairman. The chairman shall be responsible to organize and lead the regular elders' meetings. In his absence, the vice-chairman will undertake for these responsibilities. (1Tim3:1-7; Tit.1:5-9; Ps.34:13; Eph.4:25; Matt.5:37; 1Cor.14:40)

### SECTION 3 - Deacons:

**Paragraph A. General Statement.** Jesus Christ, as the head of the church, has ordained the office of deacon as a help to God's people in general, and to the elders in particular. The office of deacon is not a ruling office, but the deacons are to administer the ordinary business, secular affairs, and benevolent concerns of the church. The deacons execute their duties in cooperation with and under the oversight of the elders. (Acts6:1-6; 1Tim.3:13; 1Tim3:10; Acts20:17,28; 11:30)

**Paragraph B. Number, Qualifications, and Chairmanship.** Neither the number of, nor the length of term for deacons shall be fixed, but as many as are needful for the work shall be chosen from among the men of the church who give evidence of the scriptural qualifications for the office. They may continue in office as long as they are able and willing to serve, and hold the confidence of the congregation.



The qualifications for a deacon are found in Acts6:3 and 1Tim.3:8-13. All deacons must affirm agreement with our Confession of Faith and our Constitution, and are under moral obligation to make known to the church any change of convictions regarding these standards.

In order that the deacons function in an orderly way, the elders in consultation with the deacons shall choose one of the deacons to be the chairman and one to be the vice-chairman. The chairman will be responsible to communicate to the elders all deacon related business and concerns, as well as organize and lead their regular meetings. In his absence, the vice-chairman will undertake these responsibilities. *(Acts6:3; 1Pet5:2; 1Tim.3:8-13; Ps.34:13; Eph.4:25; Matt.5:37; 1Cor,14:40)*

#### SECTION 4 - Church Officers (recognition, installation and confirmation):

**Paragraph A. General Statement.** The local church with the guidance of scripture and dependent upon the Holy Spirit is responsible to appoint me to the offices of elder and deacon. Each potential officer shall have a desire for the office and no man shall be nominated to either office without his prior consent. The church should recognize the call of Christ and observe in the man the evidence of graces and gifts which scripture requires for the particular office.

This responsibility to recognize the gifts of Christ to His church is a matter of such importance that it should be discharged with much prayerful waiting upon God for guidance, a careful consideration of the relevant Scriptures, and an objective evaluation of each man considered for office. These activities are the responsibility of each individual member of the church.

**Paragraph B. Process of Recognition.** (Recognition of officers through nomination and congregational approval)

- 1. Nominations.** Nominations to the office of either elder or deacon are to be made by the elders. Every member is urged to seriously consider whether they perceive any member to be qualified for office and communicate the names of each man to the elders. The elders with prayerful and biblical objectivity consider each recommendation and then determine who should be nominated. At any time during the year the elders may nominate men to either office and call a special congregational business meeting for their consideration. Members are also free at any time to communicate with the elders the names of men who may be potential officers. *(Acts14:23; Tit.1:5; 1Tim.3:1;1Pet.5:2; Acts6:1-6)*
- 2. Congregational Approval.** There shall be at least a period of a month from the time of a man's nomination until the meeting called for his public examination and congregational vote. The members have a solemn obligation to prayerfully assess the nomination in light of the relevant scripture passages. Any reservations about the man's fitness for the office should be brought to that man and the elders, and the congregational vote is to be postponed until such reservations are satisfactorily resolved. At the church business meeting when the man nominated to office is brought under consideration, both and his immediate family shall leave the room while his qualifications are under consideration by the congregation in the fear of God and the light of scriptures. A written ballot shall be taken at this time. It is the desire that the vote be unanimous, but if not, then no less than 80% of members present and voting shall be required for the election of an officer. *(1Tim3:1-3; Tit.1:5-9)*

**Paragraph C. Installation and Confirmation.** Once an officer is recognized by congregational vote, he shall be publicly installed in his office at a regular worship service by prayer and laying on of hands by the elders of the church. Church officers shall hold office as long as they are faithful to their calling and have the confidence of the congregation. *(Acts6:6; 14:23; 1Tim.4:14)*

## SECTION 5 - Discipline of Church Officers:

**Paragraph A. Warrant.** Though elders are overseers of the flock, they are also members of the flock. Each elder is therefore under oversight of his fellow elders, and is subject to church discipline as are all members. Deacons are also under the oversight of the elders and they too are subject to church discipline. *(Gal.2:14; 1Tim.5:20; 1Tim.3:2)*

**Paragraph B. Procedures.** The same procedures that are used for the discipline of church members are to be followed in regard to discipline of church officers. The process of discipline may be initiated by the elders or by individual members of the congregation. This being a very serious and delicate matter, the elders shall proceed with due caution and earnest prayer. If the elders deem it necessary to take disciplinary action or remove one from office then the congregation is to be immediately informed. If the congregation imposes corrective action upon an officer then he shall be removed automatically from office. If the vote is less than the majority required, then the officer must submit himself to a vote of confidence, which will require 80% majority of members present and voting to remain in office. *(Matt.18:15; 1Tim.5:19; Prov.19:2)*

## SECTION 6 - Termination:

### Paragraph A.

**Voluntary Resignation.** An officer may resign his office for good and valid reasons if he finds he is no longer able to discharge the duties of it with a good conscience. There may also be other ministry opportunities or ministry training, which would require an officer to resign. *(Acts24:16)*

**Loss of the Confidence of the Congregation.** The elders may seek a vote of confidence for any officer at any time, giving their reason for it and recommendation in the matter. The officer must receive an 80% vote of confidence to remain in office.

**Disciplinary Action.** An officer may be removed from office by congregational vote for disciplinary reasons. (See section 5)

**Paragraph B. Implications of Termination.** When a man leaves office, he no longer retains the authority of that office, nor does he continue in its function, privileges and titles in relation to the church.

It is expected that all former officers will respect the sanctity of the trust previously given to them and they will maintain the confidentiality of all church matters to the extent required by the scriptures, this constitution, and the judgement of the existing elders.

A former officer may be considered again for office, but only in the manner described in this constitution. *(Prov.11:13)*

## SECTION 7 - Temporary Leave of Absence and Sabbatical:

An officer may be able to discharge the duties of his office with a good conscience and request a temporary leave of absence or sabbatical for a time period up to one year from the date the letter requesting the leave is received by the eldership without having to resign. This request must be presented and approved by the Elders.

- a) If the leave of absence was for a period of 90 days or less, the officer may resume his office upon his return.
- b) For a leave of absence over 90 days the Elders shall evaluate each leave of absence and approve the reinstatement of the officer on leave. The said reinstatement will be effective at the end of a waiting period during which the officer shall attend all the church meetings unless providentially hindered. This waiting period shall be for a minimum period covering one week for each partial or full month of leave. The Elders may seek congregational vote by making recommendations to the Congregation regarding the reinstatement to service according to Section 6 (2).
- c) In the event the leave of absence extends over a period of more than one calendar year, then paragraph B of SECTION 4 of this Article applies.

## Article 9 - Trustees

### SECTION 1

In order to “render to Caesar the things that are Caesars” (Matthew 22:21) and in accordance with the laws of Canada and New Brunswick, though the scriptures do not recognize the office of trustees, yet trustees shall be elected by the church to represent the church in the execution of corporate legal documents. (Matt.22:21)

### SECTION 2

The trustees shall be elected for a term of three years. They will be elected at the annual business meeting and serve until their successors are elected. Trustees may be elected from church officers or from the congregation at large.

### SECTION 3

The trustees are to perform such legal and business transactions as are designated to them by the governing authorities. In the performance of their duties, trustees are to act at the direction of the elders, and where required by law and our corporate documents with the consent of the congregation.

## Article 10 - Additional Personnel

In addition to Officers and Trustees, the elders may appoint additional personnel according to the needs of ministry. A paid or volunteer personnel does not in and of itself constitute an officer's or a trustee's position. These personnel shall be appointed or dismissed by the Elders. The Elders shall seek congregational approval if the appointed personnel will be representing the church in the normal discharge of their duties.

## Article 11 - Congregational Business Meetings

### SECTION 1 - General Statement.

There shall be three (3) categories of business meetings under this Constitution. These are (1) the annual business meeting, (2) meetings required for either congregational vote, and (3) meetings called for purposes not requiring a congregational vote.

**Paragraph A.** The annual business meeting shall be for the purpose of receiving reports from the elders, deacons, and any church ministries from which a report is requested by the elders; for the confirmation of officers, and the transaction of other business, which may include the initial election of elders and deacons.

**Paragraph B.** Other business meetings that may require a congregational vote may include, but not limited to, the initial election of elders and deacons; matters involving the purchase and sale of church properties; replacement elections for trustees, and certain matters of church discipline as set forth in Article 6 of the Constitution.

**Paragraph C.** Meetings may also be called for matters not requiring a congregational vote. These meetings may be called for the hearing of special reports; seeking counsel from the congregation; and announcement of certain actions by the elders that don't require a vote. Meetings may be called on an emergency basis to advise the congregation of serious matters of concern in advance of a meeting requiring a congregational vote. Finally, meetings may be called for the purpose of instruction in rules and conduct, so that we do all things decently and in order.

### SECTION 2 - Meetings (notice and voting).

- a) No less than ten (10) days notice will be given of the annual business meeting and other meetings that require congregational votes. A written notice will be posted and announcement made at the stated meetings of the church.
- b) Meetings not requiring a congregational vote can be called upon shorter notice.
- c) All members present at a properly convened meeting of the church shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.
- d) As a rule the chairman or vice-chairman of the elders shall preside at congregational business meetings. If they are unable to serve, or due to the nature of the business being considered, the elders may appoint another officer to preside.
- e) In order that the conduct of church business may reflect the mind of Christ, and not merely of men, the members should form their judgments in their voting in subjection to the word of God and in prayerful reliance upon the Spirit of God who indwells them.
- f) All members in good standing and no less than 18 years of age may vote on any question properly brought before the congregation. Unanimity of heart and mind shall at all times be sought and prayed for, but if this is not realized, of the members present and voting, no less than 80% of the vote is required to make any resolution valid. (*Acts15:22,25-28; 13:1-4; 2Cor.8:19; Acts6:2-7; 1Jo.2:27*)

## **Article 12 - Amendments**

This constitution may be amended by three-fourths (3/4) majority of the members present and voting at a duly convened business meeting of the congregation. No proposed amendment may be voted on which has not been distributed to the congregation in written form at least one (1) month prior to such a meeting. Also, during that period, separate from the meeting at which a vote will be taken, there must be at least one (1) stated meeting at which the elders shall present the biblical reasons for the proposed amendment and entertain appropriate questions.

**PROVIDENCE REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCH began to meet and operates as of January 2, 2000. The biblical principles of this constitution have been our guidance since that time.**

**NON PROFIT CLAUSE: This organization shall be carried on without purpose of gain for its members, and any profits or other gains shall be used in promoting its objectives.**