

# KOSSUTH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH

2901 KOSSUTH STREET

LAFAYETTE, INDIANA

## CONSTITUTION

This is the Constitution of the Kossuth Street Baptist Church, Lafayette, Indiana

## ARTICLES

### Article I – Church Name

The name of this church shall be “Kossuth Street Baptist Church”

### Article II – Purpose Statement

Kossuth Street Baptist Church exists to glorify God as a family of believers by leading people in a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.

A growing relationship with Jesus Christ...

- Begins as people are lovingly confronted with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and receive Him by faith.
- Continues as people are publicly identified with Christ and His Church.
- Is expressed as people grow in their obedience to His teaching, are equipped to serve in His church and world and empowered to love one another.

### Article III - Statement of Faith

**A. The Scriptures** - We believe the Holy Scriptures to be the very Word of God, the product of the breath of God and thus verbally inspired in all parts. Therefore, the Holy Scriptures are without error as originally given by God. They are altogether sufficient in themselves as our only infallible rule of faith and practice. In addition, they are the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions should be tried.

*II Timothy 3:16-17, II Peter 1:19-21*

**B. God** - We believe in the one Triune God who is personal, spirit, sovereign, perfect, infinite and eternal in His Being. He is also wisdom, power, love and holiness. God is separate from and above the world as it's Creator and still present everywhere as sustainer of the world. He is self-existing and self-revealing in three distinct persons- the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, each of whom is to be honored and worshipped equally as true God.

*Mark 12:29, Psalms 104, John 5:23-26, I Corinthians 8:6, Revelation 4:11*

**C. The Son** - We believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, the second person of the Triune God. Without any essential change in His divine person, He became man by the miracle of the virgin birth, thus to continue forever as both true God and true man. He was tested as we are, yet without sin. As the perfect Lamb of God He gave Himself in death upon the cross, bearing there the sin of the world, suffering its full penalty of divine wrath in our stead. He rose from the dead and was glorified in the same body in which He suffered and died. As our High Priest He ascended into heaven, there to appear before the face of God as our Advocate and Intercessor.  
*John 1:1, Matthew 1:23, Colossians 2:9, Hebrews 4:15, Galatians 3:13, John 20:25-28, I John 2:1*

**D. The Holy Spirit** – We believe in the Holy Spirit who is the third person of the Triune God. The Holy Spirit is the divine agent in creation, revelation and redemption. He convicts the world of sin, restrains evil and regenerates those who believe. He indwells, baptizes, seals, empowers, guides, teaches and sanctifies all who become the children of God through Christ.  
*Acts 5:3,4, I Corinthians 2:10, John 16:8-11, I Corinthians 6:11-19*

**E. Man** – We believe in the creation and fall of man, that he was directly created by God and was not in any sense the product of animal ancestry. Man was made in the divine image. He sinned through his personal disobedience to the revealed will of God and brought physical and spiritual death to the entire race. Man is universally sinful in both nature and practice, alienated from the life and family of God and has no possible means of recovery or salvation within himself.  
*Genesis 1:26-28, Genesis 3:1-24, Romans 5:12, Ephesians 4, Romans 1:18*

**F. Salvation** – We believe in salvation by grace through faith. Salvation is the free gift of God, neither merited nor secured in part or in whole by any virtue or work of man, but received only by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. In Christ all believers presently and personally possess a host of blessings: the gift of eternal life, a perfect righteousness, sonship in the family of God as well as deliverance and security from all condemnation. Further, in Christ, the believer possesses every spiritual resource needed for life and godliness and the divine guarantee that they shall never perish.  
*Romans 3:24, Titus 3:5, John 3:16, I John 5:13, II Peter 1:3*

**G. Satan** – We believe in the existence of Satan. We further believe that he was originally created a perfect and holy being but through pride and unlawful ambition he rebelled against God, thus becoming completely corrupt in character. Satan is the adversary of God and His people and the leader of all evil angels and spirits, the deceiver and god of this present world. His powers are supernaturally great but limited by the purposes of God who overrules all of his wicked devices for good. Finally, we believe that Satan was defeated at the cross, thereby making certain his final doom.  
*Ezekiel 28:13-17, John 8:44, Revelation 12:9-11, Matthew 12:24-26, John 16:11, Ephesians 6:12-18.*

**H. The Church** – We believe in the One True Church, the body and bride of the Lord Jesus Christ. He began to build the Church on the day of Pentecost and will complete it at His Second Coming. The Holy Spirit baptizes all true believers of the present age into the church. Members of this spiritual body should assemble themselves together in local churches, consisting of baptized believers associated by a covenant of faith. The believers should meet for purposes of worship, prayer, fellowship, evangelism, giving, teaching, united testimony and the observance of the two New Testament ordinances. Those ordinances are baptism by single immersion, as a public testimony of faith, and the Lord's Supper, a commemoration of the death of Christ. According to Scripture, there are two officers in the church: Pastor, also called elder or bishop, and deacons. *Ephesians 4:4, Acts 2:41-47, I Corinthians 12:12-13, Hebrews 10:25, Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 8:26-39, I Corinthians 11:23-28, I Timothy 3.*

**I. Eschatology** – We believe in the Second Coming of Christ. His return will be personal, visible and glorious; a blessed hope. The time of His return has not been revealed but is always imminent. When He comes, those who have died in Christ will rise from their graves. Living believers will be transformed into an immortal state and all believers shall be forever with Christ. He will then pour out God's righteous judgments on the unbelieving world. Afterward, He will descend from heaven with His church and establish His glorious kingdom over all nations for a thousand years. At the end of those years, He will raise the unrighteous dead for their final judgment and usher in the eternal state.

*Titus 2:11-13, I Thessalonians 4:16-18, Revelation 20:11-15*

**J. Life After Death and Eternal Judgments** – We believe in future life, bodily resurrection and eternal judgment. The Spirit of believers, upon their death, go to be with Christ in heaven where they abide in joyful fellowship with Him until their bodies are raised from the grave. Their bodies will be changed into the likeness of His glorious body and their works shall be brought before the judgment seat of Christ for the determination of their reward. The spirits of the unrighteous, upon their death, go into Hades, where they are kept under punishment until the final day of judgment. At that time their bodies shall be resurrected and they shall be judged, condemned and cast into the place of final and everlasting punishment, the lake of fire.

*Philippians 1:21-23, I Corinthians 15:35-58, II Peter 2:9, Luke 16:19-31, Revelation 20:11-15*

**K. Personal Godliness** – We believe in righteous living and good works. We do not believe that we can obtain our salvation through these things, but that they are proper evidence or fruit of our salvation. As Christians, we should keep the Word of God, seek the things which are above, walk as our Lord walked, be careful to maintain good works and especially accept as our solemn responsibility and privilege, the taking of the Gospel to a lost world.

*Ephesians 2:8-10, John 14:23, Colossians 3:1, I John 2:6, Acts 1:8*

**L. Separation** – We believe in separation from the world. Since we are citizens of Heaven and children of God, we should walk in separation from this present world, having no fellowship with its evil ways. Abstaining from worldly amusements and unclean habits which defile body and mind, we are also to remain separated from professing Christians who walk in outright disobedience to the word of God so that they may be ashamed. This separation also extends to churches, councils and other entities that deny the great and essential doctrines of the Word of God.

*II Corinthians 6:14-18, I Thessalonians 5:22, Ephesians 5:3-11, Colossians 3:11, Romans 16:17, II Thessalonians 3:6, 14*

**M. Spiritual Gifts** – We believe that God gives spiritual gifts, allowing us to serve others and worship Him. We also believe that God gave special gifts of tongues, healing, miracle working and others during the initial stages of establishing the Church of Jesus Christ. These special gifts were given as evidence of the Church's supernatural character until the Word of God was given in its complete form. After the Word was complete, the special signs were no longer needed. We do, however, believe that God still performs miracles and that healing is still very much a part of His program.

*I Corinthians 12, 13:3-10, James 5:13-16*

**N. Roles of Men and Women** – We believe that Adam and Eve were created in God's image, equal before God as persons and distinct in their manhood and womanhood. Distinctions in masculine and feminine roles are ordained by God as part of His created order. All of Scripture displays the equally high value and dignity that God attaches to the roles of both men and women. Scripture also affirms the principle of male headship in the family and in the church. In the family, husbands should forsake harsh or selfish leadership and grow in love and care for their wives; wives should forsake resistance to their husbands' authority and grow in willing, joyful submission to their husbands' leadership. As Christians, men and women share equally in the blessings of salvation; nevertheless, some governing and teaching roles within the church are restricted to men. *1 Corinthians 14:34-36; Ephesians 5:21-33; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Peter 3:1-7; Titus 2:5; Genesis 1-3, 1 Timothy 2:11,12*

*These Articles of Faith do not exhaust the content of our creed, which is the whole Word of God. They are not intended as a limit to the Word of God. We do believe that, insofar as these articles extend, they are a true presentation of sound doctrine as taught in the Scriptures and therefore binding upon us as Christian believers.*

*The Articles of Faith shall be as now recorded in the Courthouse of Lafayette, Indiana.*

## **Article IV - Bylaws of Kossuth Street Baptist Church**

### **I. Fellowship**

- A. Initial Membership Requirements** - Any born again believer in the Lord Jesus, after being baptized by the scriptural mode of immersion, upon recommendation by the Advisory Council, may be received into the

fellowship by a vote of the church at any regular church meeting. Any born again believer who has been immersed may, upon recommendation by the Advisory Council, be received by letter from another church of like faith and practice, or by confession of faith in Christ, by a vote of the church at a regular meeting.

- B. **Attendance** - As expressed in our church covenant, each member of Kossuth Street Baptist Church is committed to be present at the services of the church. A member's lack of attendance is reason for concern about the individual's spiritual welfare. If this occurs, the Advisory Council and/or the pastor(s) shall try to determine the reason for the member's lack of attendance. If the reason is questionable, or if the member cannot be contacted, this information shall be presented to the Advisory Council. Upon affirmative vote, all reasonable effort shall be made to contact the member by mail encouraging him or her to improve their frequency of attendance. The member has the option to provide the church with written information that may justify their lack of attendance. A reasonable time (14 days) shall be allowed for the member to respond, after which the member's response or lack thereof shall be considered by the Advisory Council. If the Advisory Council recommends that the member be dropped from the church's membership roll, such recommendation shall be brought before the congregation at the next regularly scheduled business meeting. Upon affirmative vote of the congregation, the member shall be dropped from the roll and notified by mail of this action.
- C. **Discipline** - If any member should persist in conduct that is not becoming to a member of the body of Christ, the deacons and the pastor shall meet with **the member** according to Galatians 6:1, Matthew 18:15-18, I Corinthians 5:9-13, II Corinthians 2:8
- D. **Transfer**- Upon request from a church of like faith, church letters of transfer may be granted any member not under discipline. Such letters must be addressed to the requesting church of the same faith and order. Those desiring to unite with a church not of our conviction and policy may be given a certificate of standing to date.
- E. **Watchcare Membership** - Unmarried students living in our area for a limited period of time who meet membership qualifications for our church but do not wish to remove their membership from their home church of like faith, may become Watchcare members by vote of the congregation. Advisory Council recommendation is required beforehand, as in the case of regular membership. Watchcare Members shall not hold elected office or vote on matters of church business but shall be able to teach Sunday School, usher, work with youth and similar ministries. Watchcare Members must convert to full membership within one year of completion of their studies or be automatically removed from the membership roles.

## II. Senior Pastor

- A. **Qualifications** - The senior pastor is a man who is equivalent to what the Bible describes as those gifted as pastor/teachers (Ephesians 4:11) and who also hold the office of an elder (1 Timothy 5:17) and who meets all of the character standards of applicable New Testament passages. In addition, he is an active pursuer of God (1 Chronicles 28:9), one who acknowledges the Lord in all his ways (Proverbs 3), and a man of study and prayer (Ezra 7:10, Acts 6:2-4). KSBC believes that the Bible puts forth at a minimum the following qualifications. Such men must be:
- Above reproach (1 Timothy 3:2,7; Titus 1:7) and exemplary models for the flock to follow (Hebrews 13:7; 1 Peter 5:3) as they themselves follow Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1).
  - Able to provide good leadership (1 Timothy 5:17) in the humility of Christ (John 13:12-16).
  - Students of the Word with the spiritual gift to teach sound doctrine and refute those who contradict (Titus 1:9).
- B. **Calling** – The calling of the Senior Pastor shall be upon recommendation of the deacons to the church and by a two-thirds majority of the active voters present at a business meeting which has been announced for two consecutive Sundays preceding the meeting. Only one candidate shall be recommended for consideration by the church at one time before another is considered.
- C. **Duties and Responsibilities** - It shall be the duty of the Senior Pastor to preach and teach the Word, to administer the ordinances and perform the other duties incumbent on his office. He shall be an “ex-officio” member of all boards and committees and be the overseer of the church. The Advisory Council and the existing Senior Pastor shall determine the position of Moderator at Congregation and Advisory Council meetings. The Senior Pastor will be responsible for the administration and general management of the church staff and Associate Pastors.
- D. **Ending the Pastoral Relationship** – The dissolving of the Senior Pastor’s relationship with the church may be considered upon either of the following conditions: Pastoral resignation (with a minimum notice of 30 days before termination of services); recommendation by the Advisory Council based upon a verified charge of immorality, heresy in doctrine, apostasy or failing to properly attend to his duties as described above. His temporary removal from the pulpit may be performed at any time by vote of the Advisory Council upon verified charge for the above offenses. (Matthew 18:16, 1 Timothy 5:19) The Senior Pastor’s removal from office may take place upon an affirmative vote by a two thirds majority of the active voters present at a business meeting which has been announced

for two consecutive Sundays preceding the meeting. His removal upon said vote will be immediate.

### **III. Associate and Assistant Pastor**

- E. **Qualifications** – Same as “Senior Pastor” above.
- F. **Calling** – Same as “Senior Pastor” above.
- G. **Duties and Responsibilities** – The duties and responsibilities of the Associate Pastor(s) shall be as assigned by the Senior Pastor.
- H. **Ending the Pastoral Relationship** – Same as “Senior Pastor” above.

**IV. Advisory Council** – The Advisory Council is the Leadership of Kossuth Street Baptist Church. It shall be made up of Deacons, Senior and Associate Pastors and the Administrator of Highland Christian School. Of the Advisory Council, only the Deacons shall be allowed to vote on items of church business or concern. Leadership for the Advisory Council shall be chosen from the Deacons. The Advisory Council elects from the Deacons men to serve the Council as Chairman, Vice Chairman, Clerk and Treasurer. The Advisory Council Chairman may attend the meetings of any church committee, as he desires. Care shall be taken to assure that only men mature in Christ are elected to fill these positions. The Advisory Council Officers will act as corporate officers as needed. Officers of the Advisory Council may use the office staff or other church members to assist them in the completion of their duties. The Advisory Council shall be responsible for the competency of other office holders. They or their appointees shall be responsible for all literature circulated within the church.

### **V. Deacons**

A. **Qualifications** – The church shall elect men to the office of Deacon who meet the qualifications set forth in I Timothy 3:8-13. The term Deacon means “servant” and shall not be construed to mean ruling in any sense. They are at all times servants of the church and subject to its corporate action.

B. **Election and Term** – Deacons shall be nominated each year by October 31 by a committee of the Senior Pastor, who shall be Chairman, outgoing Deacons and an equal number of church members approved by the Advisory Council. Members shall submit names for nomination by placing the names of men they wish to have considered into a clearly marked box placed in a convenient location. A Deacon, having served at least a two year term, will not be eligible to return to office until one year has elapsed following his completed term of service. There shall be eight Deacons for the first 100 members and one Deacon added for every additional 50 active members thereafter (membership as of October 1 of the year of election). Term of office for Deacons shall be three years with one third, as nearly as possible, being

elected each year. Election for Deacons shall take place at the Annual Meeting held in December.

C. **Duties**— The duties of the Deacons shall be to serve in the areas below:

1. Assistance – The position of Deacon shall be one of a servant to the church and it's members. They shall visit the sick and administer benevolence to those in need. They are to assist the Pastor in the fulfillment of his duties including the reception of new members and discipline of members. They shall also be responsible for providing assistance in administration of the church ordinances including the Lord's Supper. They are to serve the church by acting as a Pulpit committee to supply the pulpit and carry out all other pastoral duties in the absence of a regular pastor.

2. Finance and Facilities – The position of Deacon shall be one of service through financial responsibility. The Advisory Council shall regularly review financial reports and documents. They shall be responsible for the financial accountability and integrity of the church. They shall present to the congregation, for approval, a budget for the following year at the Annual Business Meeting. They are to supervise the care for the church building, to hold, repair and preserve the same. They shall not spend or obligate the church for more than \$1000.00, except for ordinary budgeted operating expenses and emergency repairs, without the consent of the church. They shall not have authority to sell, lease, give away, or dispose of church property, nor to mortgage or encumber the same with debt, except, as the church shall approve. Use of the church property shall be under their authorization and jurisdiction. They are to be responsible for any business of the church that is not entrusted to a special committee

3. Administration - The Deacons shall, through the Advisory Council, approve appointment of the leaders of various church ministries such as the HCS Board, Kossuth Street Baptist Church Campus Ministry, and others as necessary. The Advisory Council shall also approve the start or significant change of existing ministries or programs of the church. The Advisory Council shall approve hiring of pastoral or church staff. They shall maintain an accurate and current membership list. They shall, with the Senior Pastor, appoint an auditor to audit the church books at the close of each fiscal year. They shall see that all legal papers and insurance policies are in a safe place.

## **VI. Appointed Positions**

A. Clerk – Duties are to keep an accurate record of the proceedings in all business meetings of the church and Advisory Council meetings. **The Clerk** shall also maintain current and accurate membership records.

B. Financial Secretary – Duties are to receive and accurately record all money from all tithes and offerings. **The Financial Secretary** shall have charge of the division of funds as designated by the donors, shall place them

in the hands of the treasurer each week and shall prepare an annual report of giving for each contributor. **The Financial Secretary** shall give a report at each Annual Business Meeting or when called upon by the Advisory Council.

C. Church Treasurer – Duties are to receive from the Financial Secretary and take responsibility for all money of the church and to disperse those monies as directed by the Advisory Council and congregation. **The Financial Secretary** shall keep an accurate account of all receipts and expenditures and present a report at the Annual Business Meeting. Monthly reports are to be presented to the Advisory Council.

## **VI. Meetings and Order**

### **A. Regular Meetings**

1. The church body shall meet each Sunday morning for corporate worship and at other designated times as recommended by the church leadership and approved by the congregation.
2. At a worship, service on the first Sunday of each month, the Lord's Supper will be observed unless temporarily changed by the Advisory Council.
3. New members may be received into the church at any regular service.
4. The annual meeting shall be held in December. It shall be the duty of the Pastoral Staff, Deacons or staff with responsibility over major ministries of the church, and other selected heads of departments to present their reports.

### **B. Other Meetings**

1. Special business meetings of the church may be called by the Senior Pastor, the Advisory Council or by the presentation of a written petition to the Senior Pastor or the Advisory Council chairman. The petition must contain the signatures of at least 10% of the voting members of the church. Said petition is to be read from the pulpit on two consecutive Sundays preceding the meeting.

### **C. Fiscal Year and Quorum**

1. The fiscal year of the church shall begin on the first day of January.
2. In all church business sessions, 25% of the voting members shall constitute a quorum. Said active members must be eighteen years or older.

- D. **Robert's Rules of Order** shall be used as a standard in all business sessions.

## **VIII. Amendments**

- A. These Bylaws may be amended at any business meeting of the church by two-thirds vote of quorum of present members, providing the proposed amendment has been read to the church on two consecutive Sundays preceding the meeting.

## **IX. Finances**

- A. **Acquisition of Moneys** – This church and any auxiliary organization, with the exception of Highland Christian School, shall raise funds solely by the scriptural method of tithes and free will offering. All appeals for funds shall be subject to the approval of the Advisory Council or the pastor. Highland Christian School is permitted to engage in appropriate fund raising activities subject to the approval of the Highland Christian School Board.
- B. **Payment of Obligations** – All current expenses of the church are to be paid by the treasurer when due.

## **Article V - Covenant of Kossuth Street Baptist Church**

I, as a member of Kossuth Street Baptist Church, a Christian through the blessing of God's grace, have accepted Christ as my savior and committed myself to God. I now joyfully and solemnly commit myself to this local assembly of believers.

I commit myself to sharing in the responsibilities of this church as an active member of the body of Christ. I will do this by praying for the church's growth and by inviting the unsaved and unchurched to join us in worship and study. I will warmly welcome those who are new to our assembly. I will pray for the unsaved and for the spiritual growth of our body.

I pledge myself to showing Christ's love to my fellow church members by submitting myself to the authority and discipline of the leadership of this church. I will not gossip or try to tear down other members but will encourage them in order to build them up. Further, I will make every effort to promote harmony and growth among these people.

I vow to serve in the ministry of this church by identifying and using the gifts that God has given me. I will allow myself to be equipped for service by my pastors. Finally, I will purpose to look out for the interest of others, a servant, like my Lord and Savior.

I will protect the reputation and strengthen the testimony of this church by attending faithfully. I will give, as God allows me, of my financial resources, not by compulsion, but out of love and service. I will conduct myself in such a way as to make my life worthy of the gospel of Christ and keep myself from habits and lifestyles that would dishonor him.