

# CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

## PREFACE

On January 3, 1987, a Constitution and By-Laws committee was formed for the purpose of revising the Constitution and By-Laws. The first draft of this revision was made available at the first quarterly business meeting in March 1987. Having followed the proceedings as described in this document for revision, the final reading was done on September 29, 1987.

The Constitution and By-Laws committee consisted of:

Rufus A Strother Jr., Pastor  
Deacon Robert Gayle, Chairman Deaconess  
Silence Dessaure, Secretary  
Trustee Gerard Brown  
Reverend Robert Bruce  
Deaconess La Verne Harper  
Bro. Charles Holmes  
Deacon Robert James  
Deacon Hercules Jones  
Trustee Carrie Reazer

## CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF THE ANTIOCH BAPTIST CHURCH

### ARTICLE I

Section I. This organization shall be known as the ANTIOCH BAPTIST (MISSIONARY) CHURCH INC. of Bedford Hills, New York.

### ARTICLE II

Section 2. The object of purpose of this organization shall be the spiritual, moral, social, and economic improvement of its members, and the spreading of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

### ARTICLE III

**Section 1.** Any person professing faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and ready to follow Him in Baptism as a public profession, may become a member of this organization on the reception by a majority vote of members present at a regular Church Business meeting, and being recommended by the Pastor and the Board of Deacons.

**Section 2.** Those who have been members of Churches in consequence of any particular circumstances, having no letter of recommendation or letter of dismissal may be received on their Christian Experience, upon recommendation of the Pastor and the Board of Deacons.

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**Section 3.** Members from other Churches holding the same faith may be received by letters of recommendation or dismissal from their respective fellowships upon recommendation of the Pastor and the Board of Deacons.

**Section 4.** Persons who have lost their membership with the fellowship for any cause may be restored by a majority vote of the membership on confession of their errors, and presenting satisfactory evidences of experience at the time of restoration, upon recommendation by the Pastor and the Board of Deacons.

**Section 5.** There shall be a Board of Trustees composed of odd numbers of not less than Three (3), and not more than nine (9) whose term of office shall be from one (1) to three (3) years. The term of office of two or more (depending on the number on Board) shall be expired each year and their successors shall be chosen by ballot, hand, or voice vote at the Annual Corporate meeting - to be held on the first Tuesday in January of each year, or alternate date at the discretion of the Church. (As provided in Article 7, Sections 130, 131, of Religious Corporation Laws, Chapters 35-37 of the general laws of New York State).

(a)The action of the Board shall be ratified by a majority vote of members in good standing with the fellowship (financially and spiritually). No action of the Board shall be final without a majority vote of the fellowship.

### ARTICLE IV (Meetings)

**Section 1.** In addition to the weekly worship services held on Sunday, there shall be a devotional meeting on Wednesday night of each week. The time and place of other religious meetings shall be fixed by the Pastor, or in absence of a Pastor the Board of Deacons.

**Section 2.** A Church School (Sunday School) shall be regularly maintained with one session on each Sunday.

**Section 3.** The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be administered on the First Sunday of each month, unless otherwise set by the Pastor.

**Section 4.** The Annual Corporate meeting shall be held on the first Tuesday in January, or alternate date at the discretion of the Church, at which time all Church officers and Department presidents shall be elected.

### ARTICLE V (Discipline)

**Section 1.** Any member believing he or she has a just cause of offense against another member, shall call upon them in the spirit pointed out in Matthew 5:23-24 and Matthew 18:15-20 and settle it if possible. If not the matter may be brought before the Pastor and the Board of Deacons in writing, and then before the fellowship, if there is sufficient need to warrant it.

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**Section 2.** When a member by common rumor is charged with intemperance, immorality, or crime it shall be the duty of the Pastor and the Board of Deacons to inquire into the matter, and if necessary be brought before the Church (fellowship), and dealt with according to the Holy Bible, and Hiscox Directory for Baptist Churches.

**Section 3.** Gossip is the first step of slander and slander will destroy the peace and harmony of any Church or community. Proverbs 11:13 - Chapters 16 and 28. Members engaged or taking part in gossip of any kind, which may prove injurious to a member or members of the fellowship, or if found guilty of taking or plotting against the fellowship and its government, gospel steps shall be taken to convince such persons of their errors. If these fail, the hand of fellowship may be withdrawn from them.

**Section 4.** All members are to be governed by the Holy Bible and the Constitution and By-Laws adopted by the membership. The Hiscox Directory for Baptist Churches shall help in our search for proper guidance.

**Section 5.** No member shall be excluded or dropped from the Church roll unless they default in their responsibility to the fellowship as set forth in the Constitution and By-Laws, or without due notice, or an opportunity to be heard, if that be requested.

**Section 6.** No member shall be allowed the privilege to suggest, advise, or vote on matters pertaining to the welfare of the Church, who is not in good standing both spiritually and financially.

### ARTICLE VI (Amendments)

**Section 1.** This Constitution may not be amended except by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present voting at a regular Business meeting, notice having been given of the proposed amendment in a previous Business meeting. And amendment shall not become effective until it has been read to the body at three regular Business meetings.

### BY-LAWS

#### ARTICLE I (Committees)

**Section 1.** The Moderator of the Church Business meeting shall appoint a Nominating Committee prior to the Church Annual Corporate meeting. This committee shall bring in and recommend to the Church the following slate of officers:

- (a) Three (3) Trustees or the number of terms expired.
- (b) Church Clerk and Assistant
- (c) Financial Secretary
- (d) Treasurer
- (e) Musicians (on appointment of the Pastor)
- (f) Sunday School Superintendent (on appointment of the Pastor)

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**Section 2.** The Moderator of the Church Business meeting shall appoint a Budget Committee to prepare and present a budget annually. The composition of this committee shall be as follows: 3 Trustees, 3 Deacons, and 3 members at large.

**Section 3.** The Music Committee: The Music Committee shall consist of Presidents of all Choirs, Chairman of the Board of Deacons or representative, Music Director, and all Staff Musicians. This Committee will function under the auspices of the Pastor and report directly to him.

**Section 4.** The Scholarship Committee: The Scholarship committee shall consist of seven (7) members, and administer the Annie Y. Fisher Scholarship Fund. There shall be three (3) three year terms, three (3) two year terms, and one (1) one year term. The Scholarship funds will be used for Antioch Baptist Church members upon graduation from High School. This fund will be funded by monies budgeted by the Church. The Scholarship committee shall be governed by its By-Laws as adopted by the Church body.

**Section 5.** All other committees shall be appointed by the Pastor as needed.

### ARTICLE II (Church Meetings)

**Section 1.** Church Business meetings shall be held quarterly, March, June, September, and January - Date and time shall be set by the Pastor.

**Section 2.** No Church business meeting shall be held without being called by the Pastor, or in his absence the Board of Deacons.

**Section 3.** In order to do business that shall be recognized legal, a quorum of nine (9) members in good and regular standing must be present.

**Section 4.** Members wishing to present important issues for discussion should present these issues to the Pastor and/or Official Board prior to the Church Business meeting.

**Section 5.** All auxiliaries of the Church must set a monthly meeting date, and must make quarterly and annual reports to the Church. In their annual reports they must recommend to the Church the person they have selected to be their president or chairperson. These reports must be in writing and submitted to the Church Clerk

### ARTICLE III (Members)

**Section 1.** No person shall be received into the membership of this Church without expressing a willingness to become subject to the rules and regulations of this Church.

**Section 2.** Once a member has been received into the membership of this Church, he or she is entitled to unite with any auxiliary in this Church he or she desires; providing he or she has the qualification necessary to function in that auxiliary.

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**Section 3.** No dues will be charged in any auxiliary of this Church. As long as a member is in good and regular standing in the Church, he or she is in financial good standing in the auxiliary. (Offerings may be taken in the meeting of the auxiliaries).

**Section 4.** All members must sign a pledge card on or before the last Sunday in each year for the coming year. They must pay their pledges regularly in order to be in good and regular standing in the Church. These pledges must be given through the envelope system so that the Financial Secretary may have an accurate record of the membership. Any member two (2) months behind in their pledges, without being exempted by the Official Board forfeits all his or her rights as a member. Once a member has forfeited his or her rights due to lack of financial support or responsibility; in order to reinstate these rights, all outstanding pledges must become current.

**Section 5.** Members leaving this community, moving into another community, shall apply to this Church for a letter of recommendation or dismissal. All members in good and regular standing with the Church will be entitled to such letters.

**Section 6.** Letters shall not be given members to join another Church within our community, unless thoroughly convinced of the fact that it is for the best interest of all concerned. However, this shall be a matter to be decided by the Church after the matter has been thoroughly discussed.

### ARTICLE IV (Duties of Pastor and Officers)

**Section 1.** It shall be the duty of the Pastor to have a general oversight of the work of the Church and all its branches, with special regard to its growth and welfare. He shall preside as Moderator at all Business meetings of the Church, and shall see that the Constitution and By-Laws are carried into effect. He shall act as Executive Director of all Administrative and business transactions.

**Section 2.** In case of the absence of the Pastor, or his inability to serve - the Church shall elect a Moderator to preside.

**Section 3.** As to the Pastor's relationship to the Church - no member or members, no officer or officers, no group or groups, shall be considered sufficient to ask for the Pastors resignation. This action can only be accomplished by a quorum of (2/3) active members in good standing, and must be passed by (2/3) of those members attending that business meeting.

**Section 4.** The Pastor shall be governed according to the Holy Bible and Hiscox Directory, Chapter " An Accused Minister" pages 206-215.

**Section 5.** The Pastor and congregation must give each other ninety (90) days notice prior to termination of Pastorate, unless otherwise agreed upon by both parties.

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### Duties of Trustees

**Section 6.** The Board of Trustees shall have the responsibility for temporalities and properties, real and personal, belonging to the Church, and shall administer the same in accordance with the rules of the Church as authorized by the Church. They shall not use such property or income for any other purpose than that stated by the Church.

(a) The Board of Trustees shall meet each month at such time and place fixed, and three members shall constitute a quorum. They shall audit all claims and all bills against the Church. They shall devise and carry into effect such business-like methods as support of the Church by its members; they shall provide a book of minutes and records of all proceedings at their meetings.

b) The Board of Trustees should not only be Business minded persons, but should be persons of spiritual insight.

### Treasurer of the Church

**Section 7.** The Treasurer shall be bonded and will receive all monies belonging to the Church and its auxiliaries. Deposits shall be made in the account of the Antioch Baptist Church in a bank approved by the Church. All disbursements shall be made by check

(a) The treasurer shall give a comprehensive report at all Business meetings and whenever called upon to do so by the Church.

### Church Clerk

**Section 8.** It shall be the duty of the Clerk to keep a faithful record of business meetings, and maintain a complete record of all members and their addresses, inform the Pastor of meetings etc., and conduct the correspondence of the Church.

(a) The Assistant Church Clerk shall perform the same duties in absence of the Church Clerk.

### Financial Secretary

**Section 9.** It shall be the duty of the Financial Secretary to keep a record of the finances of the Church, including the pledges of all members. Individual (personal) financial reports shall be granted to any member upon request.

### Board of Deacons

**Section 10.** The Deacons shall have a general interest in the religious affairs of the Church and cooperate with the Pastor in the discharge of his duties. They shall make provision for the due administration of the ordinances. They shall meet once a month.

All members shall be entitled to one copy of the Constitution and By-laws. A copy shall be given to the Church Clerk to be placed on file.

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**CERTIFICATE**

We, the undersigned Officers of the Antioch Baptist (Missionary) Church, having been duly authorized by its members at the regular third quarterly business meeting, this 29th day of September, 1987, do hereby attest by the affixing of our signatures hereunto, that the above Constitution and By-Laws, was adopted by the Antioch Baptist (Missionary) Church on the heretofore mentioned date.

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Pastor

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Church Clerk