



CHURCH CONSTITUTION

First International Baptist Church of Copenhagen, Denmark

Adopted at General Church Meeting

April 28, 2002

Amended at Annual General Meeting

February 5, 2006

1. THE PREAMBLE

We declare and establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith, and to govern this body in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberty of each individual church member, and give the church freedom in its relation to other churches, organizations, and legal entities. It is a structurally autonomous, financially independent organisational entity and a separate church that will continue to meet for worship and fellowship in Kristuskirken (Baggesensgade 7, DK2200 Copenhagen), the First Baptist Church of Copenhagen, Denmark.

2. NAME

This body shall be known as the

FIRST INTERNATIONAL BAPTIST CHURCH of COPENHAGEN (FIBC)

3. OBJECTIVE

To be an international fellowship of English speaking people for worship, discipleship in the Christian faith, and community in faith and practice.

4. STATEMENTS OF FAITH AND PRACTICE

The Holy Bible is the recorded, inspired Word of God, and is the basic statement of our faith. We are bound together as a local body of baptized believers in the

faith of the Lord Jesus Christ and with the true church universal. We are personally committed to sharing the Good News of salvation with lost mankind.

5. MEMBERS

Everyone who desires for FIBC to become his or her place of Christian inspiration and growth is welcome. Our fellowship will consist of all those who choose to participate in our worship services, Bible studies and social fellowships.

Anyone may apply for membership by filling out a membership request form. After meeting with the Pastor and one or more members of the Church Council, during which he or she will tell of their faith commitment to Christ, and meeting the requirements for membership in FIBC he or she will be presented for membership at a congregational meeting.

MEMBERSHIP

1. A. Full Membership

Anyone may become a full member of FIBC

- a) By publicly confessing faith in Jesus Christ as his or her Saviour and upon being baptised by immersion.
- b) By transfer of membership from another church of like^[1] faith and order where he or she has been a full member in good standing.

Full Members may act and vote on the transactions of the Church (e.g. changes to Constitution, financial, call of long-term pastor), upon election serve on the Church council and as leader of co-ordination teams.

2. B. Associate Membership

- a) Anyone may become an associate member of FIBC upon statement of faith in Jesus Christ as his or her Saviour and subscribe fully to the objectives and the Statement of Faith of FIBC.
- b) Associate members may remain a member of their home church.

Associate members will have the same privileges of full members, except for voting on changes to the Constitution and the call of a long-term pastor.

3. C. Participant in Fellowship

- a) Anyone may be a part of the Fellowship of FIBC by regular attendance. He or She may be listed in the Directory of FIBC and receive the Newsletter and other information regarding church activities.
- b) He or She may serve on church teams but may not be an officer of the church, a team leader or vote in church meetings.

4. D. Termination of Membership

Membership in FIBC shall be terminated in the following ways:

- a) Upon receipt of notification of transfer to another church or letter of resignation.
- b) Ratification of recommendation for removal from membership list by the Church Council at a Church meeting.^[2]
- c) Death.

6. TEACHING GUIDELINES FOR OUR FAITH AND PRACTICE

- a) **The Scriptures:** The Holy Bible was recorded by divinely inspired writers and thus is the written record of God's revelation of Himself to mankind. It is the central focus of Christian union and is the supreme standard for all human conduct.
- b) **The Triune God:** There is one and only one true and living God. The eternal God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit with distinct personal attributes but without division of nature essence or being. God as Father reigns with providential care over His created universe. Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God and Saviour of the world who died upon the cross and provided redemption for the sins of all repentant and accepting mankind. His Holy Spirit lives in the hearts of all believers as the very Spirit of Almighty God. He illuminates our understanding of truth and exalts Christ in all things. He enlightens and empowers believers and the whole church in worship, evangelism, missions, and in ministry.
- c) **Mankind:** Humankind was created by the special act of God in His own image and after His likeness, and is the crowning glory of His creation.
- d) **Salvation:** All who accept Jesus Christ as the risen Saviour and Lord are considered Christian believers. Repentance of the sin of unbelief and acceptance of Christ as Redeemer from his or her sin results in reconciliation with God through personal salvation. Each believer is set apart for God's own purposes in this life and for eternal life in Heaven.
- e) **God's Purpose of Grace:** To preserve His creation, mankind, for eternity, and to provide the abundant and full life on earth which man can have under God's plan of love for the obedience, and faithfulness.
- f) **The Church:** The true church of God is composed of all the redeemed of all ages. A local congregation is a representative unit of the whole body of those who believe and accept Jesus Christ as Saviour. This local church is autonomous in nature, functioning under the democratic processes espoused under the Lordship of Jesus Christ for His church. Individual members of the church are equally responsible to God and His church, as they are privileged to be a part of His body.
- g) **The Church Ordinances: Baptism and the Lord's Supper.**
 - 1) **Baptism** as is administered by immersion in water as practiced in the New Testament. It is a symbolic rite of obedience to portray

the life, death and resurrection of Christ. There is no redemptive value or saving power in this ritual itself, but serves as a visible witness of the newfound faith of the believer. Believer's baptism follows a person's public profession of faith in Christ and repentance of sin. Baptism by immersion in water is a pre-requisite for full membership in FIBC.

- 2) The Lord's Supper is the second ordinance Christ gave to His church. The Lord requested that believers observe this symbolic ritual together as the gathered community of faith. This memorial act helps believers understand the full meaning of the life, death and resurrection of Christ. It also serves to focus our attention on His Second Coming.
- h) The Lord's Day: According to the New Testament, Sunday is the new "Lord's Day", the first day of every week. It is set aside for worship and rest. Each Sunday commemorates Christ's resurrection from the dead.
- i) The Kingdom of God: God is ruler of the universe and all it entails. He is also the personal, loving Master of individual lives committed to Him through (our) faith in His Son, Jesus Christ.
- j) Last Times: God alone will bring this world to a close in His own way and in His own time. Christ will return to earth to bring all things to completion.
- k) Evangelism and Missions: It is the duty of all believers and all churches to endeavour to make disciples of all peoples, beginning at home and extending to the whole world.
- l) Education: Christian teaching within the church and outside the church is absolutely necessary if the Christian church is to propagate the Gospel as required in God's Word. God has given the church this task to teach the young, the uninformed, and His followers His Gospel message of love and redemption from sin.
- m) Stewardship: God owns all the earth and everything within it. We are trustees, or stewards, of His possessions, not really the owners of anything. We should use all of our God-given resources for His glory and honour, helping others along the way, while maintaining our own well being as God intended. We are commanded to support the church's ministry, outreach, and pastor.
- n) Cooperation: It is our Christian duty to work together in harmony with all other Christians and churches to fulfill the calling of God upon all of us. We believe in autonomous churches working voluntarily and cooperatively in one accord to achieve the greater good for the Kingdom of God and His church on earth.
- o) Religious Liberty: God alone is Lord of the individual conscience and of every local church congregation. He has left us free from the doctrines and commands of men, which are contrary to His Word.

7. STRUCTURE

The governance of FIBC is vested in Christ as the head of the church and the spiritual guidance of the Holy Spirit, as discerned by the collective membership of this local church.

The Church Council shall make recommendations to the church regarding all matters for the proper functioning of the church in carrying out its objectives and in its local and worldwide ministries. The Church Council shall make recommendations to the church concerning the needed Officers and their duties and terms of service in the Operational Guidelines of FIBC. The members of the Church Council shall be the Coordinators for each group of teams and full members of FIBC according to the attached organizational chart.

The membership of the church will hold an 'Annual General Meeting' (AGM) to approve the election of Church Council, accounts and budget. During the year, the Church Council will call 'Ordinary Church Meetings' (OCM) for the purpose of obtaining approval^[3] and informing membership on relevant issues. As necessary, the Church Council can call an 'Extraordinary Church Meeting' (ECM) to resolve urgent issues requiring approval of members. The call for these meetings will follow the Operational Guidelines of FIBC. A quorum for all Church Meetings shall be those members present and voting.

The membership of this church shall decide through democratic processes all the recommendations presented by the Church Council. FIBC is not be subject to the control of any other ecclesiastical body, although it recognizes and shall sustain the obligations of mutual concern and counsel and cooperation with other entities. The FIBC shall be in dual affiliation with The Denmark and the European Baptist Convention of English language churches. Baptist Union of

The FIBC is committed to upholding the laws of the local community and the nation in which we are privileged to serve the Lord, which is Copenhagen, Denmark.

8. RELOCATION OR SEPARATION

- a) When the FIBC desires to relocate it will give Kristuskirken six months notice prior to relocating.
- b) In the event of an unfriendly separation by a part of the FIBC congregation, these guidelines shall be followed:
 - 1) The rules of separation established by FIBC shall prevail.
 - 2) All entities of the separating part of the Church shall become the property of FIBC, including the name of the church, all monetary funds in its possession, and all other assets both tangible and intangible.

9. CLOSURE

In the event of FIBC ceasing to exist as a church it will seek appropriate advice from the Danish Baptist Union and European Baptist Convention as to the way forward.^[4]

10. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Motions to amend this constitution shall only be considered upon written recommendation from the Church Council or by a written recommendation and signed by at least 50 % of those who are full members. Proposed changes meeting these criteria shall be presented at a regular congregational meeting. These changes will be approved upon 2/3 of members present and voting in favour at the next congregational meeting.

RULES OF ORDER

- a) The FIBC shall be governed in parliamentary procedures through the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*.^[5]
- b) Should this constitution be in disagreement with the above rules of order, this constitution shall take precedence.

Footnotes:

^[1] A church of like faith and order is a church that has the same faith and order as FIBC, i.e. one that requires publicly confessing faith in Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour and has been baptised by immersion in keeping with the guidelines of our faith.

^[2] An example for recommendation for removal is, i.e. absence from activities of the Church for period of two years and no response to contact attempts from the Church Council.

^[3] e.g. to obtain approval for acceptance of people applying for membership

^[4] A preferred option could be for members to return to Kristuskirken with any assets both tangible and intangible becoming the property of Kristuskirken.

^[5] As part of the duties of the Church Council an updated copy of Robert's Rules of Order will be available made for consultation by members.