

# **CHURCH CONSTITUTION**

First International Baptist Church of Copenhagen, Denmark

Adopted at General Church Meeting

April 28, 2002

Amended last April 30, 2023

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## **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 organizational entity and a separate church that currently meets for worship and fellowship in Kristuskirken (Baggesensgade 7, DK2200 Copenhagen), the First Baptist Church of Copenhagen, Denmark.

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## **2. NAME**

This body shall be known as the

FIRST INTERNATIONAL BAPTIST CHURCH of COPENHAGEN (FIBC)

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## **3. OBJECTIVE**

To be an international fellowship of English speaking people for worship, discipleship in the Christian faith, and community in faith and practice, and to plant and support similar international fellowships across Denmark and other countries.

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## **4. STATEMENTS OF FAITH AND PRACTICE**

We believe that the Holy Bible is the recorded, inspired Word of God, and is the basic statement of the Christian 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.

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## **5. FELLOWSHIP**

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 confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior, and choose to participate in our worship services, Bible studies and social activities.

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 ministry teams but may not be a Church Officer, Elder, serve on the Church Council, be a ministry team leader or vote in church meetings.

## 6. MEMBERSHIP

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Our membership will consist of those who have applied for and met the requirements of joining the Church membership.

Anyone may apply for membership by filling out a membership request form. He or she must meet with the Pastor and one or more members of the Church Council and tell of his or her faith commitment to Christ. He or she must meet the requirements for either Full or Associate membership in FIBC described below. He or she will be presented for membership at a congregational meeting (a worship service or a Church Meeting).

### A. Full Membership

Anyone may become a full member of FIBC by subscribing fully to the Church Constitution of FIBC and the Teaching Guidelines for our Faith and Practice and either:

- 1) Publicly confessing faith in Jesus Christ as his or her Saviour and upon being baptised by immersion at FIBC or having been baptised by immersion elsewhere.
- 2) Publicly confessing faith in Jesus Christ as his or her Saviour and transferring his or her membership from another church of like faith and order<sup>1</sup> 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 the Constitution, financial budget, call of a Pastor), and they may serve on the Church Council, as a Church Officer, as an Elder or ministry team leader.

### B. Associate Membership

Anyone may become an associate member of FIBC by publicly confessing faith in Jesus Christ as his or her Saviour and subscribing fully to the Church Constitution of FIBC and the Teaching Guidelines for our Faith and Practice.

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 Pastor.

### C. Termination of Membership

Membership in FIBC can be terminated in any of the following ways:

- 1) Upon receipt of notification of transfer to another church.
- 2) Upon receipt of a letter of resignation.
- 3) Upon recommendation for removal from membership by the Church Council at a Church meeting, and approval by church vote.
- 4) Automatically, when a member moves away from Denmark or no longer attends worship services and fellowship activities. Their membership will be terminated 12 months after their departure or on December 31, whichever date falls later.
- 5) Death.

## 7. STRUCTURE

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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.

### A. Church Council

The Church Council shall consist of duly elected Pastors, Elders and Ministry Team Coordinators, each elected according to the process described in the Operational Guidelines of FIBC.

#### 1) Pastor

The full members of the church will elect persons to the office of Pastor. The Pastor shall be responsible for the spiritual welfare of the church's members. Pastors serve as shepherds and leaders of the church and must meet the Biblical requirements of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Elected as Pastor, these persons are automatically a member of the Church Council.

#### 2) Elders

The members of the church will elect persons from among the church members to the ministry of Elder, if such persons are needed, qualified and available. Elders assist the Pastors with pastoral care duties and provide Spiritual guidance to the church and must meet the Biblical requirements of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Elected as Elder, these persons are automatically a member of the Church Council.

#### 3) Ministry Team Coordinators

The members of the church will annually elect persons from among the church members to the ministry of Ministry Team Coordinator. Ministry Team Coordinators are elected for a two-year term and serve as leaders of the ministry teams that are assigned to them by the Council members. They may be re-elected as a Ministry Team Coordinator at the end of their term.

The Church Council may make recommendations to the church regarding the proper functioning of the church in order to fulfill its objectives in local and worldwide ministries, including the need to co-opt additional Ministry Team Coordinators to the Church Council until the next annual election. The members of this church shall decide through democratic processes all the recommendations presented by the Church Council.

### B. Church Officers

The Church Officers shall be an elected Pastor, a Clerk and a Treasurer.

- 1) The Pastor shall be elected by the full members at a Church Meeting.
- 2) The Clerk shall be nominated and elected by the members at a Church Meeting and shall be responsible for maintaining the membership roll and taking minutes of Church Meetings.
- 3) The Treasurer shall be nominated and elected by the members at a Church Meeting and shall be responsible for the oversight of the church's financial records.
- 4) The elected Church Officers are granted the authority to act as signatories for the Church's bank accounts and other official documents. The signatures of at least 2 of the 3 Church Officers are required to validate such authorization.

## **C. Church Meetings**

The members of the church will hold an 'Annual General Meeting' (AGM) to approve the annual financial accounts and budget, review the activities of FIBC and renew the vision of FIBC. During the year, the Church Council will call 'Ordinary Church Meetings' (OCM) for the purpose of informing the members of relevant issues, obtaining needed approvals of members and reviewing the financial accounts and budget. As necessary, the Church Council can call an 'Extraordinary Church Meeting' (ECM) to resolve urgent issues requiring the 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.

FIBC is not 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.

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.

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## **8. CLOSURE**

In the event of FIBC ceasing to exist as a church it will seek appropriate advice from the Baptist Union of Denmark and the International Baptist Convention as to the way forward. Any assets and funds held by FIBC will be distributed to the International Baptist Convention.

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## **9. 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 Church Meeting. These changes will be approved upon 2/3 of members present and voting in favour at the following Church Meeting.

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## **10. RULES OF ORDER**

The meetings of FIBC shall be governed in parliamentary procedures through the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*.

Should this Constitution be in disagreement with the above rules of order, this Constitution shall take precedence.

Notes:

<sup>1</sup>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 being baptised by immersion in keeping with the guidelines of our faith.