

# Constitution of

 **Evanston**  
Avenue Baptist Church

**CONSTITUTION OF  
EVANSTON AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH**

**Muskegon, Michigan**  
**Adopted January 27, 2002**  
**Revised February 7, 2016**

**ARTICLE I**  
**NAME AND ORGANIZATION**

1. **NAME:** The name of this church shall be EVANSTON AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH of Muskegon, Michigan. 1
2. **ORGANIZATION:** The church was organized June 19, 1930. Its first pastor was Rev. Jacob Huizenga. 2
3. **INCORPORATION:** The EVANSTON AVENUE BIBLE CHURCH, a non-profit, ecclesiastical, organization became incorporated in the State of Michigan, County of Muskegon, City of Muskegon, on December 13, 1948, under Act #327, Public Acts of 1931, as amended. Amendment of the corporation papers was made on February 25, 1952 changing the name to EVANSTON AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH. 3
4. **AFFILIATION:** This church shall at all times retain its autonomy. This church is in affiliation with **Converge Mid America** and **Converge Worldwide** for fellowship. 4

**ARTICLE II**  
**PURPOSE OF CHURCH**

**Section 1.**

**Our Great Commission Statement** Under the authority and power of Jesus Christ we purpose to go and make all people His obedient followers by winning them to Christ, baptizing and maturing them in Christ, and equipping them to work for Christ. 5  
*Matthew 28:19, 20*

**Section 2.**

**Our Church Mission Statement** Under the authority of Jesus Christ we will reach out to *evangelize* the lost and *embrace* each believer in Christian fellowship, so that we may *educate* one another to become like Christ, *equip* one another to work for Christ, and *exalt* God's glory together through worship. 6

*Acts 2:41-47*

**Section 3.**

<b>Our Church Mission Statement Definitions</b>	<b><u>Evangelize:</u></b> We bring people to trust Christ as their Savior and Lord. <i>Matthew 28:19a; Acts 2:41, 47b</i>	<b>7</b>
	<b><u>Embrace:</u></b> We connect believers to God's family through fellowship. <i>Matthew 28:19b; Acts 2:42a</i>	
	<b><u>Educate:</u></b> We teach believers to grow in Christ through applying God's Word. <i>Matthew 28:19b; Acts 2:42a</i>	
	<b><u>Equip:</u></b> We train believers to use their spiritual gifts/talents to serve God. <i>Matthew 28:20; Acts 2:44-45</i>	
	<b><u>Exalt:</u></b> We celebrate God's presence which leads us to worship. <i>Acts 2:42b,c, 47a</i>	

**ARTICLE III  
AFFIRMATION OF OUR FAITH**

- 1. THE WORD OF GOD:** We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.  
*2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:16-21; 3:15-16* **8**
- 2. THE TRINITY:** We believe that there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons; that these are equal in every divine perfection, and that they execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence and redemption.  
*John 1:1-18; 5:19-24; 14:11; 16:7-15; Matthew 28:16-20* **9**
- 3. GOD THE FATHER:** We believe in God the Father, an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love. We believe that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves mercifully in the affairs of each person, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.  
*Isaiah 46:8-11; 57:14-21; Matthew 5:48; 6:28-34; 1 John 5:14* **10**
- 4. JESUS CHRIST:** We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people, and personal visible return to earth.  
*Isaiah 9:1-7; Luke 1:26-38; 2:1-20; John 10:22-38; Romans 8:34; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4* **11**
- 5. THE HOLY SPIRIT:** We believe in the Holy Spirit who came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to **12**

regenerate, sanctify, and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Christ, and that He is an abiding helper, comforter, teacher, and guide.

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*John 14:15-26; 16:1-14; Romans 8:1-27*

6. **REGENERATION:** We believe that all men are sinners by nature and by choice and are, therefore, under condemnation. We believe that those who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit. **13**

*Romans 3:23-24; 5:6-21; 1 Peter 1:18-19; John 3:1-21; Titus 3:1-11; 2 Corinthians 5:14-21; 6:1*

7. **ETERNAL SECURITY:** We believe that all those saved by personal faith in Jesus Christ will be kept saved by the power of God and cannot fall from their state of grace or be ultimately lost. While all believers will not attain to the state of maturity God intends for them due to willful indifference and neglect, all genuinely saved individuals will manifest to some extent a transformed life in the doing of good works and will not finally and completely turn from their faith in Christ. **14**

*John 10:27-30; Romans 8:28-39; Ephesians 2:10; Hebrews 10:26-39; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:5*

8. **THE CHURCH:** We believe in the universal church, a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members. We believe in the local church, consisting of a company of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized on a credible profession of faith, and associated for evangelism, fellowship, spiritual growth, equipping for ministry and worship. We believe that God has laid upon the members of the local church the primary task of giving the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world. **15**

*Ephesians 4:1-5:7; Acts 2:46-48; Romans 12:5; Matthew 16:13-19; 18:15-20; 28:19-20*

9. **CHRISTIAN CONDUCT:** We believe that a Christian should strive to live for the glory of God and the well being of his fellowmen; that his conduct should be blameless before the world; that he should be a faithful steward of his possessions; and that he should seek to realize for himself and others the full stature of maturity in Christ. **16**

*Matthew 5:3-12; Colossians 3:1-17; 1 Corinthians 4:2-3*

10. **THE ORDINANCES:** We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in the water into the name of the triune God. We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for commemoration of His death. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. **17**

*Matthew 26:26-29; 28:16-20; Acts 2:38; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26*

**11. CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE:** We believe that Christian marriage is a sacred institution ordained by God for the well-being of mankind and the propagation of the human race. It is the spiritual and physical union of one man and one woman according to Scripture. **18**

*Ephesians 5:31-33; Genesis 2:18-25*

**12. RELIGIOUS LIBERTY:** We believe that every human being has direct relations with God, and is responsible to God alone in all matters of faith; that each church is independent and must be free from interference by any ecclesiastical or political authority; that therefore Church and State must be kept separate as having different functions, each fulfilling its duties free from the dictation or patronage of the other. **19**  
*Colossians 2:6-23; 1 Corinthians 10:23-24; Matthew 22:15-22; Romans 13:1-14; 1 Timothy 2:5; 1 Peter 2:4-10*

**13. CHURCH COOPERATION:** We Believe that the local churches can best promote the cause of Jesus Christ by cooperating with one another in a denominational organization. Such an organization, whether a regional or district conference, exists and functions by the will of the churches. Cooperation in a conference is voluntary and may be terminated at any time. Churches may likewise cooperate with interdenominational fellowships on a voluntary, independent basis. **20**

*Philippians 1:3-7; Colossians 4:7-17; 1 Corinthians 16:1-24*

**14. THE LAST THINGS:** We believe in the personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth and the establishment of His millennial kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment, the eternal reward of the righteous, and the endless suffering of the wicked. **21**

*John 14:1-6; 11:25-26; Matthew 24:1-25; 1 Corinthians 15:1-58; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-16; Revelation 20:1-14*

#### **ARTICLE IV** **CHURCH COVENANT**

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God, the angels, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ. **22**

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all **23**

nations.

We also engage to maintain family and private devotions; to biblically educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk carefully in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting and excessive anger; and to be temperate in all things, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the cause of our Savior. 24

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling, and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, mindful of the rules of our Savior, to secure it without delay. 25

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word. 26

## **ARTICLE V** **GOVERNMENT**

### **Section 1.**

**Our Ruling Head: Jesus Christ** Recognizing Jesus Christ as the head of the Church, this congregation shall seek to ascertain and to obey the will of our Lord in all matters of faith and of practice. 27

*Ephesians 1:22*

### **Section 2.**

**Our Governing Body:** The government of this church is vested in the body of members who compose it. Thus the final authority for decisions shall be the members to whom the leaders are responsible. 28

**The Members** *Matthew 18:15-20; Acts 6:5; 15:22; 1 Corinthians 5:4-5; 1 Peter 2:5, 9*

### **Section 3.**

**Our Ministry Leaders: The Council Of Elders** The ministry leaders of this church shall be a Council of Elders (including the senior pastor and all ordained staff pastors), men chosen by, elected by, and responsible to the membership. The Council of Elders shall be responsible for the spiritual and general oversight of the church which shall include all business, financial, and corporate affairs as well as being the legal representatives of the church. All actions of the elders shall be subject to review by the membership at any constitutionally called business meeting. The qualifications, terms, and specific duties for the Council of Elders membership at any constitutionally called business meeting. The 29

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*1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; Hebrews 13:7, 17; Acts 6:5; 15:22-23*

#### **Section 4.**

**Our Ministry Coordinators: Deacons And Deaconesses** The ministry coordinators of this church shall be deacons and deaconesses who shall be chosen from and elected by the congregation at the annual business meeting. The deacons and deaconesses shall be responsible to help coordinate the ministry departments of this church. All actions of the ministry departments shall be subject to review by the Council of Elders. The membership, terms, and duties of the deacons and deaconesses are given in the by-laws.

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*Acts 6:1-6; Romans 16:1-2; 1 Timothy 3:8-13*

#### **Section 5.**

**Our Ministry Organization** The organization of this church shall be based upon a departmental structure established on the basis of the church mission statement. The organization shall complement the mission statement so as to carry out the purpose of the church.

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#### **Section 6.**

**Our Ministry Departments** The ministry departments of this church shall be as follows:  
Evangelize: The Department of Evangelism and World Missions  
Embrace: The Department of Fellowship and Caring  
Educate: The Department of Christian Education  
Equip: The Department of Ministry Training  
Exalt: The Department of Worship, Prayer and Music  
The duties of the ministry departments are outlined in the by-laws.

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#### **Section 7.**

**Our Estate Ministry: The Trustees** Of practical importance the estate ministry of this church shall be managed by a group of trustees who are chosen from and elected by the congregation at the annual business meeting. These trustees, including one or more representatives of the Council of Elders, shall be responsible for the care and maintenance of the buildings, grounds, properties, and equipment of the church. All actions of the Estate Ministry Trustees shall be subject to review by the Council of Elders. The membership, terms, and duties of the trustees are outlined in the by-laws.

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**ARTICLE VI**  
**MEMBERSHIP**

The membership of this church shall be open to all persons professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, giving evidence of regeneration, having been baptized by immersion as a believer, and adopting the views of faith and practice of this church. The procedures for joining this church are outlined in the by-laws. 34

**ARTICLE VII**  
**DISPOSITION OF CHURCH PROPERTY**

**Section 1.**

**Division** In case of organic division of the church, the church properties shall belong to those members who abide by this constitution. Should any controversy arise that cannot be resolved, the question shall be submitted to the governing board of **Converge Mid America** and their decision shall be final. 35

**Section 2.**

**Dissolution** Should conditions arise when for any reason the church work cannot continue, the church properties, assets, and liabilities shall be transferred to **Converge Mid America**. 36

**Section 3.**

**Consolidation** Should conditions arise where a consolidation with another church of the same denomination be advisable, the Council of Elders shall be authorized by the church to negotiate the terms of such a consolidation in so far as the property is concerned. A report of such an agreement must be made to the church and approval granted by the church before legal papers are signed. 37

**ARTICLE VIII**  
**AMENDMENTS AND INTERPRETATION**

This constitution may only be amended at the annual business meeting of the church. The proposed amendment shall be submitted in writing at a previous regular business meeting of the church. The proposed amendment shall be announced from the pulpit and posted on the bulletin board at least three Sunday mornings prior to the annual business meeting. A two-thirds majority vote of the ballots cast by qualified members 38



shall be necessary for adoption.

The Council of Elders shall act as interpreters of this constitution, and any member aggrieved by said interpretation may appeal to the church for a decision.