

Constitution

and

By-Laws

Eggemoggin Baptist Church



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CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

- ARTICLE I – The Name -

The name of this church shall be EGGEMOGGIN BAPTIST CHURCH. (Incorporated at Sedgwick, Maine, June 27, 1973).

- ARTICLE II – The Purpose -

Our purpose is the edification of Christians through the teaching of God’s Word, the salvation of souls, the world-wide proclamation of God’s grace expressed in the shed blood and the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary, the promotion of Godly worship and the defense of “the faith once [and for all] delivered to the saints,” until He comes.

- ARTICLE III – Doctrine -

A. Articles of Faith

1. The Holy Scriptures

We believe that the Bible is the verbally inspired Word of God, inerrant in the original manuscripts, therefore, the supreme and final authority for faith and life. II Timothy 3:16, 17; II Peter 1:20, 21. (See our doctrine amplified Article IIIB, Section 1).

2. The Trinity of the Godhead

We believe in one God eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; II Corinthians 13:14.

3. The Person and Work of Christ

a. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men. John 1:1-18; Luke 1:35.

b. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; that His death on the cross, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice, was sufficient for the sins of mankind; and that all who believe in Him are justified on the grounds of His shed blood. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ “was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures”; and that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. John 3:16; II Corinthians 5:21; Romans 4:25; 5:9; I Peter 1:3, 4; 2:24; I Corinthians 15:3, 4.

c. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended visibly in His glorified body into heaven and is now seated at the right hand of God the Father, where, as our High Priest, He fulfills His ministry as our Intercessor and Advocate. We believe that in His substitutionary death on the cross and in His resurrection life He has secured the complete and final redemption of every believer. Mark 16:19; Acts 1:9-10; Romans 8:30, 34; I John 2:1, 2; Hebrews 7:25; 8:1; 9:12, 24.

4. The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third Person in the Trinity, that He convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; that He regenerates the sinner by the Word of God and indwells the body of each believer. We believe that, in His ministry to the individual believer, upon conviction He baptizes each into the Body of Christ and seals each until the day of redemption. We also believe that He enlightens, instructs, and guides each born-again believer; that He is the efficient power for Godly living, Christian service, and spiritual worship; and that it is the privilege and duty of each believer to be filled with the Holy Spirit. John 14:16, 17, 26; John 16:7-15; Romans 8:9; I Corinthians 12:12-14; II Corinthians 3:16; Ephesians 1:13-14; I Peter 1:23.

5. The Creation and Fall of Man

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God; and that man is totally depraved and, of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition. Genesis 1:26, 27; Ephesians 2:1-3, 12; Romans 3:22, 23; 5:12.

6. Salvation

We believe that salvation is the gift of God, brought to man by grace, and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins.

Ephesians 2:8-10; John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:18, 19.

7. The Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers

Security : We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever. John 6:37-40; John 10: 27-30; 17:11, 20, 24; Romans 8:1, 30, 38-39; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; Ephesians 1:13-14; Philippians 1:6; Hebrews 7:25; 1 Peter 1:5; Jude v. 1.

Assurance : We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word, which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh. John 10: 28; Galatians 5:13.

8. The Church

We believe that the Church of Jesus Christ began on the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit descended from Heaven upon the disciples of Christ; that it is composed solely of born-again believers called out from among Jews and Gentiles to become the Body and Bride of our Lord. Christ glorified in Heaven is its Head, and the Holy Spirit on earth is the active Agent of the Godhead Who ever seeks to bring about within its ranks conformity and obedience to the Word of God and the will of God. The one body unites believers to each other and all to Christ; its purpose is to glorify God, to evangelize the world, and to complete itself through the winning of lost souls to Christ. Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Acts 2; 1 Corinthians 12:12, 13; Ephesians 2:7; 3:10; 5:23, 30.

9. The Ordinances of the Church

We believe the ordinances of the Church to be water baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that baptism by immersion of the believer in Christ, symbolizes the believer's union with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. We believe that Christ instituted the Lord's Supper to commemorate His love as expressed in His shed blood and broken body at Calvary, and that it is to be observed "till He comes." Romans 6:4; 1 Corinthians 11:23-32; Colossians 2:9-13.

10. The Second Advent of Christ

Rapture : We believe in that "Blessed Hope," the personal, imminent, pre-tribulational, pre-millennial return of our Lord Jesus Christ for His Church. 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Revelation 3:10.

Revelation : We believe in the personal, visible, glorious return of Christ to this earth with His saints at the end of the Great Tribulation at which time He will establish His Millennial Kingdom. Zechariah 14:4-11; Matthew 24:29-30; Revelation 19:11-21; 20:1-6.

11. The Eternal State

We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men: the saved to eternal life in Heaven and the unsaved to judgment and eternal punishment in hell.

Heaven : We believe that the souls of those who receive Jesus Christ as Saviour are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in

conscious joy they await the first resurrection when body, soul, and spirit will be reunited and glorified forever with the Lord. John 14:1-6; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 3:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; 1 John 3:2; Revelation 20:10-15.

Hell : We believe that the souls of those who reject Jesus Christ and die in their sins remain after death in conscious misery until the second resurrection when with body and soul reunited, they appear at the Judgment of the Great White Throne and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer eternal, conscious punishment. Matthew 25:41-46; Luke 16:19-26; John 8:24; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Revelation 20:10-15.

12. The Personality of Satan

We believe that Satan is a personal being, a fallen angel, the author of sin, the open and declared enemy of God and man; and that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire. Genesis 3; Job 1:6-7; Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-15; Matthew 4:1-11; 25:41; 2 Corinthians 4:3,4; 1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 12:9-10; 20:10.

13. Separation and Sanctification

Separation : We believe that all the saved should live in such manner as not to bring reproach upon their Saviour and Lord; and that separation from all religious apostasy (2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-5); all worldly and sinful pleasure, practices, and associations (1 John 2:15-17); all false teachers (2 John 9-11); and all disobedient brethren

(I Corinthians 5:11; II Corinthians 3:6; Matthew 18:15-17) is commanded of God.

Sanctification : We believe that positional sanctification occurs at regeneration, but that practical sanctification is to be progressive and continue throughout the believer's life here on earth. We believe that God has made complete provision for this in the believer's identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection; in the indwelling of the Holy Spirit; by the written Word of God; and in the believer's yieldedness to Him. John 17:17; Romans 12:1, 2; 6:1-14; 7:24-25; 14:13; Galatians 5:16-23; Ephesians 1:15-2:10; 5:25-27; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 3:1-17; Titus 2:14; Hebrews 4:12; 10:14; 1 Peter 1:13-16; 2 Peter 3:18.

B. Our Doctrine Amplified

Section 1 - The Bible Version Controversy

The King James Version (1611) is our accepted translation. We believe God has given us His inspired Word in the Received Text and that alone. We also believe He has preserved that text intact, the King James Bible being the last translation in the English of that text. Psalm 12:6-7; Matthew 24:35.

Section 2 - Unscriptural Movements

We seek to advance the cause of Christ, whether at home or abroad, in accordance with the Word of God and in fellowship with those of like precious faith, and with these only. We believe the following movements to be contrary to the Word of God;

therefore, we seek to advance the cause of Christ apart from these movements and their adherents:

a. The Ecumenical Movement consisting of Roman Catholicism and apostate Protestantism which finds its expression largely in the National and World Council of Churches. We recognize that these bodies exist through the local assemblies that compose their membership and that one of their most subtle appeals to compromise is ecumenical evangelism.

b. The Neo-Evangelical Movement consisting of professed believers who hold that fundamentalism has failed and seek to advance the cause of Christ by unscriptural methods, such as infiltration where separation is commanded, by dialogue with liberals and apostates, and generally by compromise of Christian doctrine.

c. The Charismatic Movement with its undue emphasis on subjective feeling, emotion, and experience as opposed to the objective truth of our redemption purchased by Christ at Calvary. We reject speaking in tongues, the need of any believer to be baptized in or by the Holy Spirit (he has been at conversion), and “faith healing” as practiced by them, as being God’s will for believers today.

- ARTICLE IV – Covenant -

Having been born-again by the Word of God and the Spirit of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ according to the provisions of the abounding grace of God, and being justified on the grounds of the shed blood of Jesus Christ, and acknowledging our willingness to confess Him as our

Saviour before men, we do now in the presence of God, the Holy Angels, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this local assembly, within the body of Christ, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort, to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, disciplines and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully, scripturally 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 nations by means of our missionaries and fundamental faith missions.

We also engage to maintain family and private devotion; to bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and to seek the salvation of our kindred, and our acquaintances, our enemies, and all children and adults within the area of this assembly. Through the provision that God has made for victorious Christian Living it shall be our desire to abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul, and to live a life of separation from sinful and worldly practices, with a desire to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Through the love of Christ we will put away from us all bitterness and wrath, and anger and clamor, and evil speaking, and be kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us.

We recognize that one of the outstanding evidences of Christianity is love, according to the words of our blessed

Lord when He said: “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another.”

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love, remember each other in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offence, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Saviour to secure it without delay. And this we do depending entirely upon the aid of our Heavenly Father, Who so loved the world He gave His only begotten Son for our salvation, and of Jesus Christ our Saviour, Who hath redeemed us with His own precious blood, and the indwelling Holy Spirit, our Comforter, Teacher, and Guide.

- ARTICLE V – Membership -

A. Qualifications

Section 1 - Requirements For Initial Membership.

Membership in this church is to consist of those persons who:

- a. have personally accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour and show satisfactory evidence of regeneration.
- b. have been baptized by immersion.
- c. are in agreement with us in policy and practice as set forth in this constitution, by-laws, and covenant.
- d. give evidence of a desire to live a consistent Christian life by signing the church covenant and the church Doctrinal Statement.

e. have relinquished membership in any other church, sect, religion, secret order, or any group that directly or indirectly supports or is associated with the NCC or WCC.

f. have given testimony to the church and are accepted by proper vote. All members are to be received on the basis of personal testimony, not transfer of membership.

Section 2 - Requirements for Continued Membership.

All members are expected to:

a. subscribe yearly to the constitution and by-laws, by signing the church doctrinal statement.

b. participate regularly in the three weekly worship services whenever possible.

c. maintain contact with the Church, if absent for a period of time, to remain on the roll.

d. seek membership in an independent, fundamental Bible or Baptist church if moving to another area.

B. Voting Members

Voting members are those members 18 years of age or over.

C. Removal from Membership

Removal from membership is by:

1. Death
2. Failure or refusal to subscribe to the constitution and by-laws
3. Personal request

4. Vote of the church because of
 - a. doctrinal deviation
 - b. personal life after Scriptural efforts to restore
5. Release from the roll, with proper recommendation to be given to church with whom we are in fellowship on request of the member

- ARTICLE VI – Church Discipline -

Section 1 - It is the duty of the church to exercise discipline over all members. This is commanded in the New Testament: Matthew 18:15-17; Luke 17:3-4; Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 5:11-13; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 2 Thessalonians 3:6; 1 Timothy 5:20; Titus 3:10. The object of church discipline is to maintain the purity of the church and to reclaim erring members. Any disciplinary action by the church must be preceded by investigation and recommendation by the pastor and deacons. Our ascended Lord approved the church at Ephesus, because it “tried them which say they are apostles and are not.” On the other hand, He threatened the church in Pergamos with judgment because it retained those who held to “the doctrine of Balaam” and held to the “doctrine of the Nicolaitanes” (Revelation 2:2, 14, 16). If therefore, the church is to expect the approval of its divine Head, it must keep itself free from false teachers and evil persons.

Section 2 - It is the duty of church members to separate from disobedient brethren and those who have

been removed from church membership by disciplinary action. This separation is to be maintained until the brother or sister repents and is restored back into fellowship by vote of the church. This applies to any person separated from a sister church because of church discipline.

Section 3. The following matters shall be brought to trial by the church and dealt with as here prescribed:

a. Personal Difficulties

These shall be dealt with according to Matthew 18:15-17. This rule is applicable only to cases of personal difficulty, should be settled with as little publicity as possible and are to come before the church only by recommendation of the pastor and deacons.

b. Those Who Hold or Teach Views Contrary to the Confession of Faith

These shall be dealt with according to Titus 3:10. If such a one is convicted and repents not, he is to be rejected, which means excluded from church membership.

c. Immorality of Conduct

These shall be dealt with in the following ways:

1. Sudden faults, according to Galatians 6:1.

2. Confirmed habits of wrong doing, according to 2 Thessalonians 3:6.

3. Gross immorality, according to 1 Corinthians 5.

4. Worldliness of life, as spiritual fornication. All worldly persons are called by God “adulterers and adulteresses” (James 4:4);

therefore, such shall be tried according to the rule of 1 Corinthians 5. Any persons tried and convicted by the church shall be excluded from its membership until they give evidence of true repentance when they may be restored upon vote of the church.

- **ARTICLE VII** – Government -

A. Authority and Administration

We recognize that in the administration of its government and in the exercise of its authority, the church is not legislative but executive. Our authority is the Lord Jesus Christ Who is “Head of the Body, the Church” (Colossians 1:18). Our manual of government is the Word of God, especially that which is laid down for us by our Lord in the New Testament.

We recognize that the rights, power and authority that our Lord has given to His church are to remain absolutely and permanently in independent, local assemblies and not to be delegated or surrendered to those outside. We do recognize, however, the need and the privilege of associating with others of like precious faith for fellowship or advancing the cause of Christ, understanding that any action by any church or group we might associate with is not binding on us.

B. Offices

1. Pastor
2. Deacon
3. Clerk
4. Treasurer

The offices set forth in Scripture are pastor and deacon (these offices to be filled by men only). All other offices are auxiliary to assist in the proper function as our Lord's Body here.

C. Qualifications and Duties of Officers

1. Pastor

The calling of a pastor shall be made upon a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at a duly called business meeting, the nature of said meeting having been clearly announced. Only one candidate shall be considered at a time. The dismissal of a pastor shall be upon a majority vote of the voting members present at a duly called meeting, the nature of the said meeting having been clearly announced. The duties of a pastor are primarily to minister the Word of God to his flock, do the work of an evangelist among the unsaved, visit the homes and members of his congregation, and to promote a spiritual atmosphere in the church as a whole. The church shall recognize the pastor as a servant of God, acknowledge his office in the church in its scriptural authority, provide for his physical needs, and "know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves." Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:1, 4; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 5:1, 17-19; Titus 1:6-9.

2. Deacon

A deacon is a recognized servant of the church whose qualifications are clearly set forth in the Scriptures. Acts 6:3-4; 1 Timothy 3:8-13. We understand 1 Timothy 3:12, "the husband of one wife," neither to exclude qualified single men or widowers; nor to include situations of separation or

divorce. Remarriage of a widower is not seen to be in conflict with the verse.

It shall be the duty of the deacons to assist and cooperate with the pastor in the spiritual ministry of the church and in the arrangement and administration of baptism and the Lord's Supper. The number of deacons to serve at one time is indefinite, but with a minimum of one. The minimum time of church membership is two years in order to serve in this capacity and the minimum age is twenty-one years. The deacons shall elect a chairman to serve as moderator of church business meetings when the church is without a pastor.

Deacons shall give advice to the church in the absence of a pastor.

3. Church Clerk

The church clerk shall keep an accurate membership roll in a proper book provided by the church. Records of all the members, date of reception by baptism, or testimony, if previously baptized; a full record of all church meetings, motions, etc., carry on all correspondence relative to membership, and such matters as the church may direct.

The clerk shall secure the signature of the membership prior to annual meeting as to continued agreement with the constitution and by-laws.

4. Treasurer

The treasurer shall keep an accurate account of all monies received and disbursed, shall carry on the banking business in the name of the church and shall pay the current accounts without the vote of the church. The treasurer shall prepare financial statements quarterly, annually, and otherwise as may be required by the church, and shall supply the auditors

with such records as may be required when auditing church books.

D. Election of Officers

The officers must be active members and must be duly elected by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at a duly called business meeting, the nature of the said meeting having been clearly announced at the regular church meetings on the two Sundays immediately preceding such a meeting. Deacons shall be chosen annually. The clerk and treasurer shall be elected annually also.

E. Elected and Appointed Leadership – General

Our leadership, elected or appointed, is to come from our membership. In recognition of God's prescribed order of worship and then service, those serving in this capacity will be chosen from those who are active in attendance at the three regular weekly services.

F. Dismissal of Officers

Any officer of this church may be dismissed at any time by proper vote of the church.

G. Meetings

1. For worship:

The regular worship services of this church shall consist of Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and midweek prayer service. Communion shall be held at least once a month.

2. For business:

Regular: These shall be held quarterly, following the prayer meeting the last Wednesday in March, June, September, and December.

Annual: The June quarterly meeting.

Special: A special meeting shall be announced from the pulpit and/or printed in the bulletin two Sundays prior to the date of the meeting. The pastor shall be able to call a meeting immediately if necessary at any regular worship service. 1 Corinthians 5:4.

3. Procedure:

In cases of parliamentary differences, or in points not specified on the constitution and by-laws, questions of parliamentary procedure are to be determined by Robert's Rules of Order.

4. Quorum: 50% of voting membership.

- ARTICLE VIII – Finances -

The entire program of this church shall be supported by free-will offerings; this excludes any and all unscriptural methods, such as suppers for monetary gain, sale of tickets, rummage sales, etc. Debts shall not be entered into under any circumstances and the use of pledges is to be avoided.

- ARTICLE IX – Ordination Procedure -

It is our hope and desire that the Holy Spirit will choose and call out from among us Spirit-filled men to the Christian ministry. Recognizing the rights and privileges of complete local autonomy, it is the prerogative of the church

to call and conduct a council of ordination, and if desired and at the request of church and candidate, to invite pastors of like precious faith (as expressed in our doctrinal statement) to participate. When, in the judgment of the pastor and deacons, a man in this membership is called to the Christian ministry, the pastor and deacons shall, upon the vote of the church body, proceed to call and conduct a council of ordination. The ordaining council shall thoroughly examine all applicants for ordination as to their personal knowledge of Jesus Christ as Saviour, their call to the Christian ministry, and their qualifications, including their doctrinal beliefs, the Lordship of Christ in their lives, and their demonstrated ability in Christian service (6 months or more as pastor, assistant pastor or other Christian work with evidence of God's call to the ministry). Women shall not be ordained to the ministry.

It is the prerogative of the church to discipline, even to the revoking of ordination credentials of any pastor ordained under this constitution or deviant in doctrine or practice from the qualifications required for ordination. Such shall be the case only after proper trial by the church; the action of the church is final.

- ARTICLE X. – Amendments -

Section 1 - This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the voting membership present at any regular or special business meeting, provided the proposed amendments are approved by the pastor and deacons. The business meeting is to be announced and the proposed changes read to the congregation at one of the regular church services two weeks preceding said meeting. A copy of the

proposed amendments is to be posted in the church or provided to each member for at least two Sundays prior to said meeting.

Section 2 - The doctrinal statement as set forth in Article III of this constitution cannot be amended or changed.

- ARTICLE XI – Dissolution -

In the event of the termination or dissolution of this body, the remaining assets, if any, shall be distributed to one or more organizations organized and operating in harmony, in practice, and in policy with that set forth within this constitution and by-laws. Independent, fundamental churches are to have preference over para-church organizations.