

Immanuel Baptist Church, Toronto, Ontario

Rules of Order February 28, 2021

## **1. Introduction**

These **Rules of Order** have been adopted for the governance of Immanuel Baptist Church, Toronto, Ontario., Canada.

## **2. Name**

The Church shall be known as Immanuel Baptist Church.

## **3. Mission Statement**

Immanuel Baptist church is a welcoming community of Faith,  
growing deeper in the love of Jesus  
where we choose to

### **Belong Believe Become**

*Where we belong matters.*

We are a diverse group of people who belong to God and also to an authentic, loving community where we are known, valued, supported and encouraged. We warmly invite others to belong and share in the compassionate love of Jesus.

*What we believe matters.*

We believe that the Biblical message of Jesus as Saviour and Lord is both true and good news for all people; therefore, we teach and demonstrate to one another the truth of who Jesus is and the depth of his love for us, grow in our faith and find our unique place in the amazing story of God.

*Who we become matters.*

We encourage one another to be responsive to the work of the Holy Spirit and become all God created us to be. As we mature into our true identity in Jesus, we find purpose and fulfillment by intentionally drawing others into the circle of God's abundant love and grace and partnering with God in his kingdom work in the world.

## **4. Affiliation**

To carry out the wider ministry to which Christ has called us, we will maintain an affiliation with:

1. the Toronto Area Association of Baptist Churches,
2. Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec,
3. Canadian Baptist Ministries,
4. the Baptist World Alliance.

## **5. Church Membership**

### **5.1 Member**

A member of Immanuel Baptist Church is a person who has accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who has been baptized as a believer and whose name is added to the Church Membership Roll after congregational affirmation.

### **5.2 Admission of New Members**

Each individual who makes an application for membership shall be interviewed by two Deacons to hear that person's faith journey and to determine if the applicant is a genuine believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. After acceptance by the two deacons, and Council agreement the membership application will be presented to the congregation for affirmation.

For the purpose of such membership application interviews, any Active church member who has previously served as a deacon at Immanuel, qualifies to participate in such an interview.

This congregational approval may take place at any regular Sunday morning worship service. For this business matter, the normal two week notice for a regular business meeting is not necessary. Membership applications may also be considered at any regular business meeting.

Applications for membership will come in one of three categories:

1. a confession of faith and then baptism by immersion at Immanuel,
2. a letter of transfer from another Baptist Church where baptism by immersion is a membership requirement, or by
3. the relating of Christian faith and experience where membership has been in another Christian church and where the individual has been baptized as a believer.

Notice of a proposed application and processing of membership will be communicated for three weeks before the actual event. This notice will advise the church membership of the name of the candidate and the nature of the application ( baptism, transfer or Christian experience) and that a church member is to speak to a pastor, the Chair of Council or the Church Moderator if they have any concerns about the proposed member. When no such concerns have been communicated, the motion to accept the person for membership will proceed without any opportunity in the service to speak to the matter.

### **5.3 Transfer Out of a Member**

Every member in good standing is entitled to a letter of transfer to another church. Application for such a letter shall be made to the Church Council by the individual seeking the membership transfer or by the church they are now attending. The Church Council shall report on such transfers at the next Church Business Meeting.

## **5.4 Removal of Members from Membership Roll**

The Church Council shall review the Membership Roll annually and recommend appropriate action to the Church. The Church Clerk is responsible to the Council for this annual review.

**Active members** are those who have had their membership application processed as described above and who are regularly involved in the worship, support and ministry of the church. When a member has not been involved in worship, support and ministry for a period of one year, that person's name will be moved to an **inactive category** by action of the Church Council. After a further period of one year in the inactive category, and after an appropriate attempt to make contact with the individual, membership will be removed by recommendation of the Church Council to a Church Business Meeting.

The exceptions to these rules include:

1. those with health or disability limitations,
2. those absent from the Greater Toronto Area for reasons of full-time education, and
3. those involved in full-time ministry elsewhere in the world.
4. those who are active in a church plant or other congregation formally affiliated with Immanuel Baptist Church.

## **5.5 Discipline of a Member**

When a member of the church acts in a manner that appears contrary to biblical ethical expectations, or proclaims theology that appears contrary to the Congregation's general understanding, the matter will be reviewed by the Church Council, and if deemed appropriate, the Council will appoint two of its members to interview that person to seek reconciliation and/or an agreed course of action and/or repentance. If necessary, the interviewers may recommend to the Council that the individual be removed or conditionally suspended from membership. Should the Council approve the removal of membership, the final decision requires an endorsing vote of seventy-five percent of Church Members present and voting at a duly called meeting.

## **5.6 Adherent**

An **Adherent** is a person who has chosen to be a part of the Immanuel Baptist Church family, but who has not applied for nor been accepted into membership. Such an individual may be involved in worship and ministry, may be active in the ministry of the Committees of the Church, may participate in Church Business Meetings but cannot vote in them, and is not eligible for any elected office of the church.

## **6. Church Business Meetings**

Meetings for the purpose of conducting the business of the Church shall be scheduled by the Council. Meetings shall be chaired by the Moderator or a member selected by the Moderator. At least fourteen days advance notice of the meeting must be given to the members. (See exception for membership applications in 5.2) The minutes of each meeting shall be posted by the Church Clerk within 14 days of the meeting. A quorum shall be the lesser of 25 or 10% of the active members.

Voting in church business meetings is limited to Active Members of the Church, who are present at the meeting.

### **6.1 Annual Meeting**

For Accounting-Financial matters, the Church's **Financial Year** shall be January 1 to December 31. An annual meeting shall be held not later than the end of February of the following year on a date set by the Moderator. A quorum shall be the lesser of 50 or 20% of the active members.

A) Each Church organization and ministry shall provide a written report of its finances and activities of the previous year to the Church Clerk at least one month prior to the date of the annual meeting. The Church Clerk shall make available a consolidated set of these reports to the members of the Church.

B) Each Church organization and ministry that maintains a financial record shall report on its finances to the Church Treasurer by January 15 so that its finances may be included in a consolidated financial statement.

C) The Church Clerk shall report on the status of the membership list.

D) The Treasurer shall report on the income and expenditures of the Church and shall present a budget for the new year and shall furnish any other particulars that the members may require.

E). Council will report on any matters arising from the Auditors report.

## **6.2 Special meeting**

When a petition, signed by at least 10% of the congregation's active members, requests that an official church business meeting be called, the Church Moderator is required to schedule and hold such a meeting within three weeks of the petition being delivered to him/her.

## **7. Non-Budget Expenditure**

When a non-budget and non-emergency expenditure is proposed that exceeds 3% of the Annual Budget, a process of consultation with the congregation will take place that incorporates a congregational letter stating its nature, reason and how it fits into the Church's vision and goals, and which then invites responses to the Church Council within a three month period.

When the matter comes before a duly called meeting of the Church, the Council will provide a summation of the received responses.

In the case of a non-budget emergency situation that requires immediate expenditure that exceeds 3% of the annual budget, council has the authority to call an emergency meeting of the congregation and in that case, notice would be waived.

## 8. Nominations

The Nominating Committee shall consist of a Deacon or Church Officer to be named by the Church Council and 3 to 5 members elected by the church membership. A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the members. It shall be responsible for seeking candidates for election as Church Officers.

Nominations for election, which are to be presented to a Church Business Meeting in May of each year, shall be prominently posted within the Church Building and distributed to the members at least 14 days prior to the date of the meeting.

The Committee shall also nominate members to fill vacancies which occur in Church offices during the year by bringing suitable names to the next meeting of the Church Council. Such nominations approved by the Church Council shall be reported to the membership the following Sunday. Such interim nominations are effective only until the next May election and are not considered as a term of service within the limits of service in Article 9.

## 9. Church Officers

The following Church Officers shall be elected from the members at the Annual May Business Meeting for terms which begin on June 1 of the year.

<u>Church Office</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Term of Office</u>
Moderator	1	3 years
Church Clerk	1	3 years
Treasurer	1	3 years
Trustees	3	6 years
Auditors	2	1 year
Deacons	6-9	3 years
Elders	3-5	3 years x3

### 9.1 Auditors

The Nominating Committee shall nominate two Auditors at the May Business meeting. These auditors do not need to be church members.

## **9.2 Honourary Life Deacons**

The Church Council may nominate any former Deacon it wishes to honour as an Honourary Life Deacon. There shall not be more than 3 such **Honourary Life Deacons** at any one time. Honourary Life Deacons have no active involvement in the business of the Council.

## **10 Election of Church Officers**

All active members are eligible to be elected as Church Officers. With the exception of those elected to be Trustees who may serve in one other Church office, no member may serve in more than one Church office at one time, but may serve in a liaison capacity with another Board or Committee.

Nominations for election may be made by:

A) the Nominating Committee,

B) any member delivering a nomination in writing, at least 48 hours before the May Church Business Meeting, to the Chair of the Nominating Committee or to the Church Clerk. Members elected to Church offices hold office until the expiration of their term unless their membership in the Church terminates during this period. The election of Deacons and Nominating Committee members shall be so arranged that, as nearly as possible, one-third of the Committee and Council members retire each year. Retiring members shall be eligible for reelection for one further term. After two consecutive terms, the member shall not be eligible for reelection to that office for a period of one year.

The election of the Church Treasurer and Auditors may be exempt from this limiting qualification subject to the recommendation of the Church Council and the approval of the membership at the May Church Business Meeting.



Elections shall be by ballot, except when no more persons are nominated than the Offices to be filled, in which case, appointments shall become effective upon the vote of a majority of the members present.

## **11 Duties of Officers:**

### **11.1 Church Moderator**

The Moderator shall:

- A) chair all congregational business meetings,
- B) be available, as needed, for projects in consultation with the Council.

### **11.2 Church Clerk**

The Church Clerk shall:

- A) maintain the membership roll, correspond with other churches regarding membership transfers, and recommend to Council decisions regarding membership status,
- B) correspond with other churches about special events,
- C) write, maintain and publish minutes of Church meetings,
- D) gather, consolidate and publish the reports for the Annual Business meeting,
- E) maintain the record of established Church policies,
- F) maintain an Archive of Church records.

### **11.3 Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall:

- A) maintain the books of account of the Church including receipts and disbursements,

- B) carry out the financial policies as established by the Church and the Church Council,
- C) provide regular financial reports for each meeting of the Church Council and annually to the membership that accurately reflect the financial status of the Church, and
- D) be a member of the Stewardship-Finance Committee and with that Committee prepare and present a financial budget each year.

## **11.4 Trustees**

The trustees shall be commissioned to take, hold and possess the lands of Immanuel Baptist Church. The election of trustees shall be so arranged that one trustee retires every 2 years. The retiring trustee shall be eligible for reelection for a further term of 6 years. Any vacancy must be filled by the Nominating Committee at the next Business Meeting. The new trustee so appointed shall serve for the rest of the unexpired term. These appointments shall come before the May Church Business Meeting for ratification.

The trustees shall have all the powers conferred on such trustees by the Province of Ontario Religious Organizations Land Act or subsequent legislation and such further powers as may be conferred upon them by amendment of these Rules of Order provided always that the trustees shall not exercise, either alone nor in concert, any of the said powers without the consent in writing of the church members obtained by resolution passed by a majority of three-quarters of the votes of the church members present and voting, cast at a business meeting duly convened for that purpose.

It is the intention of these Rules of Order that, notwithstanding the provisions of Government legislation, the said trustees shall perform a passive role of holding, taking and possessing the lands of Immanuel Baptist Church and shall not exercise any power or discretion without first obtaining of the church members approval in writing as aforesaid.

## **11.5 Auditors**

The auditors shall:

- A) audit the books of account of the Church and examine and satisfy themselves of the correctness of the financial records of all the organizations and committees in any way responsible to the Church,
- B) report to the Church Council of their findings, and
- C) report on their duties to the Church at the Annual Meeting in February.

## **12. The Church Council**

The Church Council shall consist of not less than 6 and not more than 9 elected members, each of whom shall be called a Deacon. The Church Treasurer, Church Clerk and Moderator shall be voting members of the Council. The Lead Pastor shall be ex-officio, non-voting member of the Council. Any vacancy that occurs during the June 1- May 31 year shall be filled on the recommendation of the Nominating Committee to the Church Council. The term of office of a Deacon appointed in this manner shall cease at the next Annual Nominating Meeting and the period served shall not be included in the six year maximum period of service.

The Church Council, with the Pastor and Board of Eders, shall be responsible for the ministry of the Church, its evangelistic and missionary activities, the spiritual oversight of the congregation and its various organizations, the general pastoral care of congregants and the care and maintenance of all Church properties. The Council shall meet monthly or at the call of the Chair. A simple majority of the Deacons shall be a quorum.

## **13. Board of Elders**

The Board of Elders will consist of 3 to 5 mature, prayerful believers who will work in tandem with the Council to provide prayer and support for the Pastors, Staff, Council and the ministries of the church. A member of the Board of Elders will sit on Council as a non-voting member. The term of office will be 3 years with 3 consecutive terms allowed.

## **14. Pastoral Search Committee**

Within 30 days of the time the Church Council is aware of the need to employ a new pastor, it shall recommend a Pastoral Search Committee of five to eight suitably gifted and experienced Church Members to the Church for the approval of the members.

## **15. Alteration of Rules of Order**

Subject to the provisions described in the following paragraph, these Rules of Order may be amended by deletion, addition, or otherwise at an Annual Meeting or any business meeting by a resolution passed by the simple majority of the members present and voting.

No motion providing for any such amendment by deletion, addition or otherwise may come before the Annual Meeting or a Business Meeting unless the following steps have been taken:

- 1) notice of such motion has been given in writing by the Church Council or any member of the Church to the Church Clerk
- 2) the Church Clerk, in consultation with the Church Moderator, shall, upon receipt of such notice, establish the date of the next business meeting following the expiration of 3 months from the date of receipt of such notice for the hearing of the motion to amend, and
- 3) the Church Clerk shall post and keep posted for 3 months the notice of said motion and the date of the Church Business Meeting at which the resolution shall be considered.

## **16. Date of Approval**

These Rules of Order, replacing all prior Rules of Order, were approved by Immanuel Baptist Church on February 28, 2021, at a Business Meeting of the Church, proper notice having been given.