

CONSTITUTION
for
SAINT MICHAEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
Mifflin, Ohio

PREAMBLE

We, baptized members of the Church of Christ, responding in faith to the call of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, desiring to unite together to preach the Word, administer the Sacraments and carry out God's mission, do hereby adopt this Constitution and agree to be governed by its provisions. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

ARTICLE 1
NAME AND INCORPORATION

- 1.01 The name of this congregation shall be Saint Michael Lutheran Church.
- 1.02 This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Ohio, and uphold all requirements thereunto pertaining.
- 1.03 This congregation shall be, as it was, organized and founded in faith in 1835.
- 1.04 The previously recognized constitutional seal of the congregation, dated January 6, 1992, is hereby revised.

ARTICLE 2
MISSION STATEMENT

- 2.01 The mission of this congregation shall be to challenge all people to find a loving relationship with God through Jesus Christ and to actively support growth in their faith. We are committed to faithfully serving others, as Jesus Christ did and to show that in our continued and ever loving support of missions, including local, national and worldwide.

ARTICLE 3
STATEMENT OF FAITH

- 3.01 This congregation accepts the Apostle's, Nicene and the Athanasian Creeds as true declaration of the faith of the congregation.
- 3.02 **We Believe That Jesus Is Lord.** Matthew 22:34-40, John 14:6, Philippians 2:9-11. Jesus is the head of the church. Unity among the various expressions of the body of Christ is best achieved through focusing on Jesus, who alone is able to draw all people to Himself. Jesus

is the complete and ultimate expression of God and is part of the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

- 3.03 **We Stand On The Word Of God.** John 1:1, 1:14, II Timothy 3:16-17, Romans 15:4, Psalm 1. The Bible is our authority and sole guide for life and faith. We accept on faith that all of the Scripture is inspired and is without error; however not all interpretation is without error. Therefore we support and encourage the study of the original manuscripts, recognizing the original audiences and purposes of a text, and allowing the Bible to interpret itself. For the Scriptures are a living Word that are always relevant and revealing God's purpose for all of creation.
- 3.04 **We Desire Genuine Worship.** I Peter 2:9, John 4:23-24, Psalm 98:4-9, Psalm 105:1-4. Worship establishes and encourages a right relationship between God and His people – God is the audience. Worship is essential for the believer and central to the life of the church. In it we cast our eyes to the cross, we come under the instruction of God's Word, we are strengthened by the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, bound together as Christ's body. Worship involves the whole person – body, mind, heart and spirit.
- 3.05 **We Are Called By God.** Matthew 4:19, I Corinthians 12:12 & 27, Ephesians 4:11-16. We believe in "the priesthood of all believers" (I Peter 2:4-10). All of God's people are called to ministry and the body of Christ must recognize and affirm that call. God has gifted every believer through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit to serve the cause of Christ Jesus in the world.
- 3.06 **We Are Free In Christ.** Romans 8:1-2, Galatians 5:1, John 8: 31-36. Because of what Jesus has done for us we are free. In this congregation it is OK to have fun, it is OK to make mistakes, it is OK to say no. We are free to serve God as the Lord leads us and not out of guilt, obligation or duty. We serve God in response to what the Lord has already done for us – we serve Him joyfully.
- 3.07 **We Will "Go And Make Disciples."** Matthew 28:18-20, Matthew 4: 18-20, Luke 19:10, Acts 1:8. Jesus gave his disciples this command – "Go and make disciples of all nations." Therefore, the church exists primarily for the sake of those who don't yet belong. We will seek to invite every person to consider a living and personal relationship with Jesus Christ, for He is the only way to salvation and eternal life.
- 3.08 **We Celebrate That God Is Changing Lives.** John 8:1-11, II Corinthians 5:17, Colossians 3:15. We believe that God changes lives and that He alone has the transforming power of the Holy Spirit to create faith and help us live lives that are pleasing to Him. As believers, we accept that there is

nothing in this world that ever stays the same except the solid rock of our Salvation. We can, therefore, learn to adjust and adapt to our changing surroundings. We worship Jesus our Lord, not our tradition, not our history and not ourselves.

ARTICLE 4. BY-LAWS

- 4.01 This congregation will cause to establish Bylaws, to govern its operations of the church and its many responsibilities as directed by this instrument. No Bylaw however, may conflict with this constitution.
- 4.02 Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of the congregation by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting.
- 4.03 Changes to the Bylaws may be proposed by any voting member provided, however that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Board of Spiritual Oversight at least sixty (60) days before a regular or special meeting called for that purpose. The congregational Board of Spiritual Oversight shall notify the members of the proposal with its recommendations at least ten (10) days in advance of the congregational meeting.

ARTICLE 5. AMENDMENTS

- 5.01 Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by at least five (5) voting members or by the Board of Spiritual Oversight. Proposals must be filed in writing with the congregation council sixty (60) days before formal consideration by the congregation at a regular or special meeting called for that purpose. The Board of Spiritual Oversight shall notify the members of the proposal with their recommendations at least ten (10) days in advance of the meeting.
- 5.02 A proposed amendment to this constitution shall:
 - a. Be approved at a properly called meeting by a majority vote of those present and voting;
 - b. Be ratified without change at the next annual or special meeting by two-thirds (2/3's) majority vote of those present and voting; and

- c. Have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the Constitution.

ARTICLE 6. CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

- 6.01 The congregation council may enact Continuing Resolutions which describe the function of the various committees or organizations of this congregation.
- 6.02 Continuing Resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a two-thirds (2/3's) vote of all voting members of the congregation council.

ARTICLE 7. ESTABLISHMENT OF A BOARD OF SPIRITUAL OVERSIGHT

- 7.01 The congregation shall establish a Board of Spiritual Oversight to assist the Pastor(s) in the delivery of God's Word to His people, faithfully strive to support the churches mission for Christ and faithfully support the constitution of the church.
- 7.02 The Board of Spiritual Oversight shall be made up of no more than 10% of the voting membership total. The Board of Spiritual Oversight shall, at a minimum, be made up of at least 6 voting members and the senior pastor.
- 7.03 The Board of Spiritual Oversight shall be guided by the establishment of Bylaws, as noted in Article 4 above.