

Fabius Christian Church

Fabius, NY

Initial Publication: August 9th 2009

CONSTITUTION
& By-Laws

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THE CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I. The Name

The name of the church, referring to those assembled for the worship of God and the furtherance of His commission, which is our purpose, shall be the Fabius Christian Church of Fabius, New York.

Article II. Affiliation

The Fabius Christian Church of Fabius, New York, shall affiliate by voluntary association with other churches, societies, associations, conventions, alliances, or other religious bodies only as they provide a mutual benefit and comply with the objectives and character as herein set forth.

Article III. Objectives

The objectives of the Fabius Christian Church of Fabius, New York shall be:

- to maintain public Christian worship
- to provide opportunity for Christian Education
- to encourage Christian Witnessing
- to serve those in need
- to develop Christian character
- to share in the extension of God's Kingdom

Article IV. The Church Character

Section I Polity - The government of the Fabius Christian Church of Fabius, New York, shall be free and independent from all others with the power and responsibility of government vested solely in the body of believers who compose the congregation. Affiliations with other religious bodies are strictly voluntary and associational and for some mutual benefit or common cause. There shall be no control or governance over the Fabius Christian Church by any outside body, ecclesiastical or otherwise.

Section II Theological Principles - Fabius Christian Church of Fabius, New York, accepts The Bible, God's inspired Word, as its authority and guide in all matters of faith and practice and is in accord with the ordinances instituted by Christ in His earthly ministry which include:

- The freedom to worship God
- Baptism
- The Lord's Supper
- Each believer has direct access to God without need for any human intermediary
- Guided by the Holy Spirit a freedom in scriptural interpretation that is in agreement with the principle of biblical interpretation referred to as the "analogy of faith" meaning *all Scripture is in agreement and will not contradict itself*
- Responsibility to witness personally and socially
- Responsibility to the welfare of our community, both domestic and foreign
- Responsibility for the contribution of our tithes and offerings to support the ministries of the church
- Responsibility to disciple and encourage the growth of one another in the Christian faith

Article V. The Church Covenant

Having been led, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on profession of our faith we do now most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one Body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk in Christian love, to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and to promote its spirituality and prosperity, to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines, to give it a sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin; 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 to all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and private devotions, and as a community of believers to raise our children in the Christian faith, to seek the salvation of our families and acquaintances;

To walk in a manner that exemplifies Christ in the world, to be fair in our dealings and faithful in our engagements, to avoid anything that causes disunity in the Body;

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly and sisterly 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 make offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Savior, in efforts to encourage the Body of Christ.

Article VI. Membership

Section I Becoming a Member - Making a profession of faith, being confirmed, or being baptized, does not automatically make one a member of the Fabius Christian Church. One must also subscribe to the church Covenant, Constitution, and By-Laws, and be received into the fellowship of the church after an initial consultation with the Pastor and review and acceptance by the Board of Deacons and Deaconesses. Therefore, those who subscribe to the Covenant, Constitution, and By-Laws may seek membership upon demonstrating their Christian faith by:

1. Presenting a Letter of Transfer of Membership, being in good standing, from another Christian church; or
2. Giving a Statement of Christian Experience, having met initially with the Pastor and reviewed and accepted by the Board of Deacons and Deaconesses.

Upon meeting the above criteria, new members will be received and extended the right hand of fellowship by the church in a service designated for this purpose, be entered in the roles and receive a Fabius Christian Church membership card.

Section II Junior Membership – similarly may be available to your people under 16 years of age who also profess receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior; subscribe to the church Covenant, Constitution, and By-Laws and after an initial meeting with the Pastor and review and acceptance by the Board of Deacons and Deaconesses.

Section III Termination of Membership - Membership in the Fabius Christian Church may be terminated by any of the following:

1. By Letter of Transfer of Membership to another church;
2. By the request of the member for termination;
3. By the death of the member;
4. By congregational vote for unscriptural conduct or departure from Biblical truths held by this assembly. The matter will be brought before the Advisory Board for consideration and recommendation, if it is determined that a breach has in fact occurred and a concession or repentance is not agreed to by the member in question, the issue will be brought to the full membership in a meeting called for this purpose, which may result in the termination of membership by a two-thirds vote of a quorum of members present and voting.

Section IV Non-voting Membership List - A member of the Fabius Christian Church of Fabius, New York, shall be considered non-voting and placed on the Non-voting Membership List if they have not participated in congregational worship,

been active in any programs of the church, or financially supported the church for a period of two years. Non-voting members do not have the right to vote. Members may reactivate membership after a request and review by the Advisory Board. Members not seeking reactivation after a period of five years will be sent a letter of notification requesting a decision to become an active member or be removed from all membership roles. No response will be understood as a request to be removed from membership.

Article VII. Structure

Section I Single Board - The Fabius Christian Church of Fabius, New York; shall be governed by a single board, referred to as the “Advisory Board” made up of:

1. Five elected Church Advisors, four serve as chairs to ministry boards, one serves as moderator. In addition, there will be an elected church Treasurer, Clerk and Nursery School Administrator; together they make up the church’s ministerial/administrative Advisory Board.
2. Church Advisory Board Affiliations:
 - a) The Pastor shall have ex officio membership.
 - b) Organizations within the Church may have ex officio representation on the Board at the request of the Advisory Board.
 - c) Organizations outside of the Church with which the Fabius Christian Church of Fabius, New York, is affiliated with may be asked to consult with the Church Advisory Board.

Section II Advisors - The Advisors of the Church shall each have a specific area of concern or function as listed below and chair their respective boards or committees:

- Moderator – Oversees the regular meeting of the counselors, responsible for the official records and, with the Clerk, the dissemination of information to and from the congregation
- Spiritual Life Advisor – Chairs the Board of Deacons and Deaconesses, responsible for the organization of Worship and Music, Visitation, Men’s, Women’s & small groups
- Christian Education Advisor – Chairs the Christian Education Board, oversees, Sunday School, VBS, and the Pastor’s continuing education
- Missions and Outreach Advisor – Chairs the Missions and Outreach Board, oversees Local Community, Domestic & Foreign Missions, and other outreach ministries
- Stewardship and Finance Counselor – Chairs the Board of Trustees, responsible for the property and housekeeping, budgeting, income and expenses

Section III Pastoral Ministry - The spiritual and pastoral needs of the congregation may be provided for by contract with a person that is fully qualified by Christian character, ability, formal education, licensed or seeking licensing, and can provide references from credible sources. This may be a contract entered into independently or with another congregation. The pastor shall serve under the direction of the Advisory Board.

Article VIII. Amendments

The constitution of the Fabius Christian Church of Fabius, New York, may be amended at any Annual Meeting of the church by a two-thirds vote of a quorum of members present and voting; notice of such proposed amendment having been presented in writing at the previous Quarterly Congregational Meeting.

By-Laws

Initial Publication: 2009

Article I

Boards and Committees

Section 1. There shall be an Advisory Board consisting of the chairpersons of the Board of Deacons and Deaconesses, Board of Trustees, Treasurer, Board of Christian Education, Missions Board, Nursery School Director, Clerk, and Moderator. The Moderator shall act as chairperson. The board shall act in an advisory capacity for the total program of the church. They shall meet monthly setting a regular date following the trustees meeting in order to have current information. Among their responsibilities, the Advisory Board (a) will receive a proposed budget for the church to include the missions and goals of the various boards and committees of the church by November 1st from the Treasurer for discussion and approval. During these discussions, taking place in November and December, adjustments may be recommended after careful consideration and consultation with the affected board and committee chairs. The Advisory Board will also determine the budget lines for the salaries of the Pastor(s) and any other paid employees. (b) Conduct an annual review of the Pastor – See Section II. The Advisory Boards minutes shall be published monthly via newsletter to supplement the quarterly congregational meetings. In general, Advisory Board meetings are open to the congregation except when dealing with matters affecting individuals.

Section 2. There shall be a Board of Deacons and Deaconesses who shall assume their duties as outlined in the By-Laws, Article II, Section 2.

Section 3. There shall be a Board of Trustees who shall assume their duties as outlined in the By-Laws, Article II, Section 3.

Section 4. There shall be a Board of Christian Education who shall assume their duties as outlined in the By-Laws, Article II, Section 4.

Section 5. There shall be a Missions Board who shall assume their duties as outlined in the By-Laws, Article II, Section 5.

Section 6. The Nominating committee shall consist of at least three members elected at the quarterly meeting prior to the annual meeting. In addition to making nominations for Advisory Board candidates, the Nominating Committee with the Clerk shall review the membership list for accuracy and bring to the attention of the Advisory Board any recommended changes. The Nominating Committee shall reconvene as necessary for the remaining portion of the year.

Section 7. A Pulpit Committee consisting of five representative members shall be elected by the church when necessary. Its members shall remain active as long as necessary to provide a supply preacher(s) and take steps to secure a pastor to recommend to the church.

Article II

Duties of Officers

Section 1. The Pastor: (a) The Pastor shall have spiritual oversight of the activities of the church being primarily responsible for helping the congregation and Advisory Board to establish and coordinate the realization of the Biblically based and God directed “Mission” “Vision” and values of the church; (b) she/he shall be an “advisory” member ex-officio of all boards and committees; (c) as advisor/exhorter she/he is not required to be in attendance of every meeting of every board or committee but is expected to attend a reasonable number based on the need for spiritual direction and/or by request of a board or committee; (d) she/he shall be chosen by a two-thirds vote of a quorum of members present and voting upon the recommendation of the Pulpit Committee at a meeting of the church regularly and duly called for that purpose. Only such a person as is fully qualified by Christian character, ability, formal education, licensed or seeking licensing, and can provide references from credible sources shall be chosen pastor of this church. (e) An annual review of the Pastor will be conducted by the Advisory Board prior to the Annual Meeting. The results will be shared as, “The Board finds after review, “the Pastor (exceeds, meets, or is failing to meet) the goals and expectations as established and agreed upon during the previous annual review”. After the results, a call for a vote of confidence by the members shall be called and again shall be confirmed by a two-thirds vote of a quorum of members present and voting at the annual meeting of the church. (f) her/his pastorate may be terminated by either party by giving at least thirty days’ notice. In case of action on the part of the church, she/he shall be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of a quorum of members present at such meeting and voting upon recommendation of the Advisory Board at a meeting of the church regularly and duly called for such specific purpose.

Any member of the church may call upon the Advisory Board for an investigation of any apparently justified complaint regarding the Pastor. The Advisory Board shall make its recommendation after due investigation.

The Pastor shall have an opportunity to appear before the Advisory Board on her/his own behalf if she/he so desires.

Additional Pastors may be retained to supplement or broaden the ministries of this church, as the congregation deems necessary. A recommendation shall be presented to the Advisory Board, which will be charged to investigate the impact of this request from both a spiritual, and resource perspective. The results to be shared with the membership at a meeting called for this purpose. A vote to move forward will be called and shall be confirmed by a two-thirds vote of a quorum of members present and voting. A vote in the affirmative shall activate

the Pulpit Committee. All practices detailed in the Constitution and By-Laws apply. In addition; (a) one pastor will be designated the senior pastor and responsible for Section 1 Item (a). (b) A clear job description must be written for each pastor.

Section 2. The Deacons and Deaconesses: (a) There shall be a minimum of two Deacons and two Deaconesses, a minimum of two to be elected each year, serving for a period of two years; (b) They shall advise and cooperate with the ' Pastor in the spiritual activities of the church and shall assist in the administration of the ordinances.

Section 3. The Trustees: (a) There shall be three Trustees, one to be elected each year for a period of three years; (b) It shall be, the duty of the Trustees to attend to all legal transactions of the church; (c) It shall be the duty of the Trustees to oversee the maintenance and development of all church properties; (d) The Board of Trustees shall meet within one week following the annual meeting to elect a chairperson, to conduct regular meetings, and a secretary, to record the minutes of their meetings, from their number. They shall set a regular schedule and meet at least monthly and shall call special meetings as needed. Financial reports shall be prepared for and prior to the monthly meeting of the Advisory Board and Annual church meeting. (e) Before the start of each fiscal year the board shall cause to be conducted the annual financial campaign and cause a budget cycle to commence with a recommendation to be prepared accordingly for presentation to the church body. (f) The Budget Cycle commences in September with the financial campaign and a call for the various boards and committees to prayerfully submit their proposed mission, goals and budget for the next fiscal year. The Trustees and the Treasurer will meet, as necessary, in October to reconcile these proposals into a single budget proposal; this along with the mission and goals statements is brought to the Advisory Board for discussion during November and December. The trustees will prepare the final proposal for presentation to the congregation at the annual meeting in January. (g) Additional meetings may be held by the unanimous consent of the Trustees. A majority of the whole number of Trustees shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting lawfully convened. (h) The Trustees of an incorporated church are not permitted under the law covering religious corporations in the State of New York 1) to engage, fix salary for, or dismiss a pastor; 2) to invest any funds or legacies received by the church without authorization by the church; or 3) to borrow any moneys, or to incur any other obligations not provided for in the budget without authorization by the church. (i) The Trustees are required to procure an audit of the financial records of the church every three years which should be conducted in the third year of the elected treasurer

Section 4. The Christian Education Board: (a) shall formulate and direct the Christian Education program of the church. It shall consist of three members one to be elected, each year for a three year term.

Section 5. The Missions Board: (a) Shall formulate and direct the missions' ministries of the church with an emphasis for promoting foreign and local missions' projects to be supported.

They shall determine the distribution of discretionary funds designated to missions or outreach. The board shall consist of three members one to be elected, each year for a three year term.

Section 6. It is recommended that all boards should meet monthly. At the first meeting after the annual business meeting, each board should elect a chairperson. This chairperson will be the representative member on the Advisory Board. It is recommended that no one serving on a board, who has served one term, shall be eligible for reelection to the same board or office until the lapse of one year. This excludes the Nursery School Director, Moderator, Clerk and Nominating Committee members.

Section 7. The Clerk: (a) The Clerk shall be elected annually to serve for one year. She or he shall keep a complete and accurate record of the minutes and membership of the church. She or he shall prepare necessary notices of the meetings of the church and of the annual meeting, stating what vacancies will occur in all boards and committees holding elected positions and cause same to be read on each of the two Sundays preceding the annual meeting. She or he shall prepare the letter for the annual Iroquois Associational meeting.

Section 8. The Treasurer: (a) The Treasurer shall be elected to serve for three years. She or he shall prepare an Annual Operating Budget” of the church and will also be responsible for preparing the Annual “Capital Budget” of the church while keeping separate accounts or funds of the monies received by her/him for the support of the church together with any other money or legacies entrusted to her/his care. She or he shall be directly answerable to the Board of Trustees to whom she/he shall make regular reports and on whose behalf she/he shall make reports to the church. She or he shall make available to the auditors her/his accounts upon request. She or he shall pay all bills on authorization of the Board of Trustees. One of the trustees shall also be designated to have backup authority to pay bills as may be required in emergency circumstances.

(b) The aforesaid regulation shall also apply to any Bookkeeper, volunteer or otherwise, responsible for the recording of church financial records. Any Bookkeeper must be approved by the trustees and shall not be authorized to endorse checks or payments from any church account. The Bookkeeper may make deposits on behalf the trustees and produce reports and other documentation for the trustees’ endorsements.

(c) The Treasurer and/or Bookkeeper shall be bonded for a maximum indemnity of \$1000.00.

Section 7. The Moderator: she/he shall be elected annually to serve one year. She or he shall conduct all general and special church business meetings. She or he shall be the chairperson of the Advisory Board.

Section 8. If any elected member of any board declines to act, the affected board is to make a recommendation to the Advisory Board to begin the process for replacement. The Advisory Board will contact the individual to provide opportunity for reconciliation. If reconciliation is not attainable, the advisory board may elect to excuse a person or persons from

said board. If any elected member of any board is excused, resigns, or dies, or ceases to be a member of this church, the nominating committee shall be activated and a person recommended to the Advisory Board to fill her/his office. The Advisory Board shall make the appointment to said office until the next annual meeting of the church, at which time the vacancy shall be filled for the unexpired term.

Article III

Meetings

Section 1. There shall be an annual meeting for the review of the year's work and plans for the coming year. The election of officers shall be held in January. Notice of this meeting shall be read publicly on the two Sundays immediately preceding the date of the meeting, the nature of the business being stated in the notice and the names of those nominated whose terms of office expire as well as the various Boards year end reports and financial reports as well as the proposed budget will be made available.

Section 2. The general business of the church shall be conducted at any regular quarterly congregational meeting. The time for these meetings shall be determined at the first meeting of the year. In case of emergency, the date may be changed or additional meetings called by the Advisory Board.

Section 3. A special meeting of the church may be called upon by written request of at least ten qualified voters of the church or by action of the majority of the Advisory Board, provided two weeks' notice as prescribed above has been given.

Section 4. Only members are qualified to vote.

Section 5. A quorum must be present at any meeting duly called requiring a vote of the members of the church. Fifteen members eligible to vote shall constitute a quorum. This number may be changed as recommended by the Advisory Board and passed at a congregational meeting.

Article IV

Special Rules of Order

Section 1. The church may adopt any special rules of procedure in its meetings it may desire provided such rules are not in conflict with the foregoing constitution and by-laws. The rules contained in Revised Robert's Rules 'of Order will be used when not inconsistent with the constitution, by-laws, and rules of order of this church.

Section 2. The moderator shall appoint a parliamentarian for each annual business meeting of the church.

Article V

Amendments

These By-Laws may be amended at the regularly called business meeting by a two-thirds vote of a quorum of members present and voting, provided the proposed amendment is given in the call and posted conspicuously in the church for one month and read on the two Sundays immediately preceding the date of the congregational meeting.