

## INTRODUCTORY STATEMENTS

### NAME

This body (*being a member church of the Associated Gospel Churches*) shall be known as:

Garside Bible Church

and hereafter be known as “the Church”.

The Bible is taken as the supreme and final authority for our faith and practice. The truth of the Scripture is the final court of appeal for all doctrinal and personal matters.

### BRIEF HISTORY

In order to ascertain the history of Garside Bible Church we must go back to the year 1907 at which time as the result of a Revival being held in the east end of Hamilton, young men moved by the Spirit of God were led to erect a building at the corner of Ruth and Barton Streets, naming it Ebenezer Hall.

In the year 1919 the work was moved to Gage Avenue North and the name changed to Ebenezer Tabernacle. This same building is now known as Bethany Gospel Chapel.

As an offshoot from this work in 1923 a Sunday School was started at the corner of Garside and Dunsmure, and it was known as Ebenezer Mission, and in 1926 it was changed to Garside Mission.

A full-time Superintendent was needed by this time and as a result Mr. R. H. Bradley answered the call. R. H. Bradley became Superintendent in 1927. He was ordained in 1935 and that was the year Garside became a unit of the A.G.C. The name was changed from mission to church. In 1937 R. H. Bradley became full-time pastor. He had continued in secular work from 1927 to 1936 when he had a physical breakdown.

The A.G.C. was formerly called the “Christian Workers Church of Canada” and was founded in 1922. In 1925 the fellowship assumed its present name, Associated Gospel Churches.

The church felt that a name change was needed which would possibly provide more of an impact on the community. In keeping with the church Motto, in 1978 the church became known as Garside Bible Church.

Several physical changes took place over the years, adding to its size and versatility, including a fire in 1981 which demolished the sanctuary.

Garside Bible Church has had a ministry down through the years of reaching people from all walks of life by adhering to that same Motto “Where the Holy Bible is Wholly Taught”.

## STATEMENTS OF PHILOSOPHY

### PURPOSE

**Garside Bible Church** exists to glorify God through obedience to His Word in our *walk, work, worship, and witness.*

**1) In our walk – Integrity (1 John 2: 6)**

*“Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.”*

**2) In our work – Unity (Ephesians 4:12-13a)**

*“To prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith”*

**3) In our worship – Sincerity (Philippians 3:3)**

*“For we . . . worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Jesus Christ, and have no confidence in the flesh”*

**4) In our witness – Sympathy (Jude 22-23)**

*“And you must show mercy to those whose faith is wavering. Rescue others by snatching them from the flames of judgment. Show mercy to still others, but do so with great caution, hating the sins that contaminate their lives.”*

### COVENANT OF MEMBERSHIP

We confess Jesus Christ to be our Lord and Saviour in the presence of all. We give ourselves wholeheartedly to His service and take His Word as the guide of our life. Having been united by saving faith to Him, we now, as a church of Christ, unite with one another in this Covenant.

We will maintain regular private prayer and the reading of God’s Word, earnestly seeking the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

We, who are the heads of families, will maintain Christian standards and devotions in our homes, and will endeavour to lead our children, or others committed to our charge, to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and growth in the Christian life.

We will regularly attend the public worship of God on the Lord’s Day, as far as Providence permits, and any other meetings for worship that the church may schedule, and we will observe together the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper.

We will walk together in brotherly love and seek to be a practical help and encouragement to one another. We will not bring to the church a complaint against any member for personal offence until we have taken the first two steps pointed out by Christ (Matthew 18:15-17). In this way we will endeavour to settle all private offences without making the matter a public issue.

We will financially support a faithful Christian ministry among us, as the Lord prospers us. We will seek also to send the Good News to the whole world, as we are given opportunity.

We will seek, by personal example and spoken word, to lead people to faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

We will endeavour to live authentic Christian lives in true godliness, abstaining from anything that is unworthy of Christ and His gospel. As believers baptism signifies death to sin and resurrection to holiness, so we will seek to walk in newness of life for God's glory.

## *CHURCH MEMBERSHIP*

### QUALIFICATIONS

The person(s) who desire to enter into membership at Garside Bible Church must have a personal relationship with Christ, a commitment to consistent Christian life, guided by God's Word and the Holy Spirit and agree to the Articles of Faith and Doctrine of the AGC.

### PROCEDURE

Candidates will contact the Pastor and be reviewed by the Membership Committee.

They must attend regularly for three (3) months prior to becoming a member and must be approved by the Official Board.

We will accept members from other AGC churches by letter of transfer.

Names for approval and dates of the membership service will be posted at least one (1) week prior to the membership service.

### PRIVILEGES

The new members will have full fellowship at Garside Bible Church and will have voting privileges at duly called business meetings.

### TYPES OF MEMBERSHIP

There are two types of memberships:

1. Dual memberships for Missionaries and Bible College Students.
2. Active members who will be involved in work of the church and will be removed from membership if they are absent for one year. (Unless due to illness or other circumstance)

### MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Membership Committee will consist of the Pastor and two (2) Elders.

## *CHURCH ORGANIZATION*

### GOVERNMENT

The government shall be vested in the body of believers constituting the membership of the Church through officers appointed, or other duly constituted agencies (such as Trustees) and according to this Constitution as amended from time to time.

### FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year shall be July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>.

### CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

All Congregational Meetings will be open to only regular attenders of the church (member/adherent). Only members 18 years of age or older may vote.

#### 1. Frequency

The Congregational Meeting will be held at least once each fiscal year in order to review reports, evaluate the past year's activities, present budget, and approve the Nominating Committee's recommendations.

Other meetings as required – following notice.

#### 2. Structure

A properly called Congregational Meeting is one that has been called by the Official Board, the Chairman of the Board or Designate.

#### 3. Notice

Public notice is to be announced at least two (2) Sundays prior to the meeting. Written notice must be posted for at least two (2) Sundays prior to the meeting in at least two (2) prominent places within the church building. Notice should include the business to be dealt with.

#### 4. Quorum

A quorum for conducting business shall not be less than 51% of the voting membership. Paid staff do not have a vote.

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee shall be composed of the Senior Pastor, two (2) Official Board members and one (1) member of the Congregation.

The purpose of this Committee is to nominate members to the Official Board of this church, giving prayerful consideration to the character, spiritual maturity and gifts of the individuals nominated.

The Pastor will call the meeting, but will not serve as Chairperson.

The Nominating Committee shall choose their own Chairman.

The Chairman will call the Committee into session in order to nominate members to the Elders and Deacons Board of the Church.

The listings of names must be posted for two (2) Sundays prior to the Annual Meeting in at least two (2) prominent places within the church building.

Further nominations may be made in writing, each such nomination being signed by three (3) active members of the church in good standing, and given to the Chairman of the Nominating Committee at least seven (7) days prior to the Annual Meeting. If the persons so nominated are found to be eligible by the nominating committee, their names shall be added to the list already posted and will be voted on by the Congregation at the Annual Meeting.

The Nominating Committee will be disbanded following the Annual Meeting.

## *CHURCH OFFICES*

### PASTOR

The Biblical Office and Qualifications for the Pastor(s) will be Ephesians 4:11, Jeremiah 3:15, Jeremiah 17:16 and Jeremiah 23:1,2.

The man called to be Pastor of our congregation must give much prayer and meditation to the principles found in these passages of Scripture.

The Pastor should be a man whose responsibility is to faithfully study the Word of God, to pray for the congregation over which God has made him the overseer, and to instruct and lead the body of believers. He must give guidance, encouragement, and counsel through personal testimony and Bible-centred ministry.

#### Terms of Reference:

When the Pastor(s) office becomes vacant, the Official Board will immediately appoint a search committee consisting of five (5) members: two (2) elders, one (1) deacon, and two (2) members of the congregation, who will choose their own Chairperson. The Chairman of the Board will initiate the first meeting. The search committee will contact and interview available candidates and as soon as possible, make their recommendations to the Official Board for consideration. A candidate will be invited to minister for a minimum of one (1) Sunday. If the Official Board is in agreement, it will present the recommendation to the congregation for a vote. Only the name of one pastoral candidate will be submitted at a time.

Before a candidate is presented to the congregation they should be approved by the A.G.C.

The calling of a Pastor will require a 75% affirmative vote of the members present at a meeting specifically called for that purpose.

The Pastor must whole-heartedly endorse this church's Constitution. The Pastor and his wife shall become members of this church upon assumption of official duties.

#### STANDARDS

If the Pastor shall not be in full accord with the doctrinal standards of the AGC, or his personal conduct, preaching, or teaching, in accordance with the church constitution, his service will be terminated immediately. Severance pay will be at the discretion of the Official Board. A congregational meeting will be held to explain the reasons for the termination.

#### BOARD OF ELDERS

The Biblical Office and qualification for Elders is outlined in the Bible in I Timothy 3:1-7; Acts 11:29-30 and Acts 20:28.

The Board of Elders will consist of the Pastor(s), Nominated Elders (minimum of two). The Elders Board will nominate the Chairman.

#### *Purpose:*

The Board of Elders shall, with the Pastor(s), have and exercise the Spiritual oversight of the congregation and its work.

A quorum for conducting business meetings shall not be less than 60% of the voting Elders.

The Elders Board will appoint their own chairman and secretary.

## BOARD OF DEACONS

The Biblical Office and qualification of the Board of Deacons is found in the Bible in I Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:1-6.

### *Purpose:*

Working with and responsible to the Official Board, to provide an advantageous physical environment. To encourage regular giving and careful administration and distribution of funds.

The Board of Deacons will appoint their own chairman and secretary.

## MISSIONS COMMITTEE

The appointment and supervision of the Chairman of the Missions Committee will be under the jurisdiction of the Board of Elders. The Chairman and committee members must be members of the church. The Chairman and members will conduct all business in accordance with the Church Missions Statement and Policies, as approved by the Official Board. The Chairman will have the responsibility to select members as required, with final approval being given by the Elders Board.

## CHURCH CLERK

The Clerk of the church shall be a person who is elected by the Official Board. This office is for a term of one (1) year, renewable annually, by the Official Board.

It shall be the clerk's duty to record minutes of all meetings of the members as well as Official Board meetings. The clerk shall maintain current records of church membership.

## FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee shall be composed of the Treasurer who shall be Chairman and a minimum of two (2) members appointed by the Official Board, excluding Pastoral staff.

The Envelope Steward, appointed by the Official Board should be a member of the Finance Committee.

## TREASURER

The Treasurer shall be appointed by the Official Board and shall be responsible for the Finance Committee and to the Official Board.

## FINANCIAL SECRETARY

The Financial Secretary shall either be a full time employee or a person appointed by the Official Board.

The Financial Secretary shall keep records of all incoming and outgoing monies of the church and its organizations and report to the Treasurer.

The Financial Secretary shall ensure that all bills are paid at the direction of the Finance Committee. The Financial Secretary shall provide monthly and annual reports to the Finance Committee.

## OFFICIAL BOARD

This Board shall be comprised of the Elders and the Deacons Boards.

The Chairman of the Elders Board will also be the Chairman of the Official Board.

The term of the Official Board will be for a term of one (1) year, disbanding following the Annual Meeting.

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

This Board shall consist of five (5) members appointed by the Official Board and will serve as long as they are members in good standing of Garside Bible Church.

The Trustees are responsible for all legal matters pertaining to church properties.

## *STATEMENT RELATING TO FINANCES*

Funds raised will be for the purpose of carrying on an effective ministry and for no other purposes.

## *STATEMENT RELATING TO OTHER MINISTRIES OF THE CHURCH*

Other ministries of the Church such as Elementary, Jr. and Sr. High, Young Adult, Adult and Seniors' Sunday and Midweek Ministries, etc. will be the responsibility of the Pastor and he may appoint qualified people to carry out these functions.

## *STATEMENT RELATING TO CHURCH DISCIPLINE*

Spiritual Responsibility.

The Board of Elders should follow the discipline methods as outlined in Scripture.

Matthew 18:15-17

Hebrews 12:10-11

The motive for discipline should be primarily to correct the offence and to restore the fallen person back into a proper relationship with Jesus Christ. (Galatians 6:1) Forgiveness and restoration are the desired goals.

Such discipline should be motivated by God's love, and after prayerful consideration be handled by the Elders as spiritual leaders of the church.

The Elders may, when deemed necessary, exercise disciplinary action on behalf of the church. The following format will be used:

Meet with the fallen person to discuss the situation, discerning all the facts.  
Make practical spiritual suggestions for restoration and allow for a response.

If the fallen person fails to respond, remove them from church membership.

The suspension from church membership will remove all voting and ministry right. The Elders will continue to work with the individual during this time to bring about reconciliation.

Complete termination may be deemed necessary if no attempt for reconciliation is made by the offender.

Re-application for church membership would be required if this takes place.

Reasons for Discipline:

- Trespass against another brother.
- Failure to uphold membership requirements.
- Immoral conduct.
- Seeking to bring factions into the church.

#### *STATEMENT RELATING TO AMENDMENTS*

An amendment must be Board approved or submitted to the Board by a member of the congregation in writing.

If a member of the congregation submits an amendment to the constitution, they may be required to appear before the Board to give explanation of their amendment.

The amendment must be approved by two thirds of the required members at a regular or special meeting of the congregation.

The amendment must be read twice from the pulpit and displayed two (s) Sundays prior to the meeting in at least two (2) prominent locations in the church building.

The amendment must be submitted to the Board thirty (30) days prior to the regular meeting or special meeting of the congregation.

#### *STATEMENT RELATING TO DISSOLUTION*

In the event that Garside Bible Church brings its work to a conclusion and dissolves, none of its assets remaining, after meeting all current responsibilities and just obligations, shall inure to the benefit of any individual member of the church, employee, pastoral staff, missionary or private individual.

All such assets by a joint decision of the members of the congregation and Official Board, and after due consideration of the stated purpose of the church, shall be turned over to another church within the fellowship of the Associated Gospel Churches and/or to the head office of the said Associated Gospel Churches.

**POLICY STATEMENTS: These statements are not part of the constitution and may be amended at any time without making changes to the constitution itself.**

#### CHURCH OFFICES

##### PASTOR

The Senior Pastor and any Associate Pastor(s) should give themselves the opportunity to meet once a week for prayer, Bible study, and coordination of their areas of service.

If more than one Pastor is employed, the Elders Board will oversee in conjunction with the Senior Pastor, areas of responsibility of Associate Pastor(s).

The Pastor shall give a minimum of thirty (30) days notice of his resignation. He will receive severance pay at the discretion of the Official Board based on his length of service.

When charges are brought by a member(s) of the congregation against the Pastor, the following procedure will be followed:

These charges must be in writing.

They must be notarized by two other members in good standing.

The Elders Board will then review the said charges, and will personally interview each party separately bringing charges against the Pastor to determine their validity.

After careful interviewing and discussion with all parties and much prayer as a Board, it will be the duty of the Chairman of the Elders Board to call the Pastor before the Elders Board and read the said charges and to allow the Pastor to respond to the charges.

After reviewing all the facts pertaining to the charges from both parties, the Chairman of the Elders Board will call all parties before the Elders Board and read their verdict and their verdict will be final and binding.

## ELDERS

The Elders exist to:

- Give overall spiritual insight and direction to the church.
- Exercise disciplinary measures to the members in accordance with article VIII of this constitution when necessary.
- Equip and build lay pastoral leadership for the ongoing of the church.

## DEACONS

The Deacons will be responsible to:

- Motivate regular giving to the end that the budget will be met and special projects financed.
- Oversee the heating, lighting, repairing and cleaning of the church property and building.
- Oversee the purchase and repair of all church equipment and vehicles.

This Board will be permitted to spend a budgeted amount before Official Board approval is needed.

## MISSIONS COMMITTEE

The Church Constitution outlines the composition of this Committee.

The purpose of the Missions Committee is to:

- Encourage prayer on behalf of missions worldwide and particularly on behalf of missionaries and mission agencies we support.
- Provide information about the missionaries and agencies that we support.
- Provide consistent guidelines by which the Committee will operate.
- Ensure the prudent use of funds allocated by the church to the Mission budget.
- Furnish a "Missions Committee Policy and Procedures" statement which will be available to any interested members of our congregation.
- Facilitate any members who feel God's call upon them in possible steps forward.

## FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee will be responsible for the following:

- Setting and administering an annual budget.
- Overseeing the recording of all monies received and distributed.
- Review and present to the Official Board monthly financial reports.
- Presenting annual Financial reports to the congregation based on the incoming and outgoing finances at the end of the church year which is June 30.
- Finances
- Freewill offering.
- Sale of Bonds for Capital Improvements.
- Monies collected to offset the cost of church social events (i.e. Christmas Banquet, etc)
- Projects approved by the Official Board.
- All monies collected must go toward the project.
- Fund raising methods are to be Board approved.

## APPENDIX

I. Purpose, Vision & Values Statement of the Associated Gospel Churches

II. Contemporary Statement of Faith of the Associated Gospel Churches

III. Articles of Faith and Doctrine of the Associated Gospel Churches