

Immanuel Baptist Church Wiesbaden, Germany

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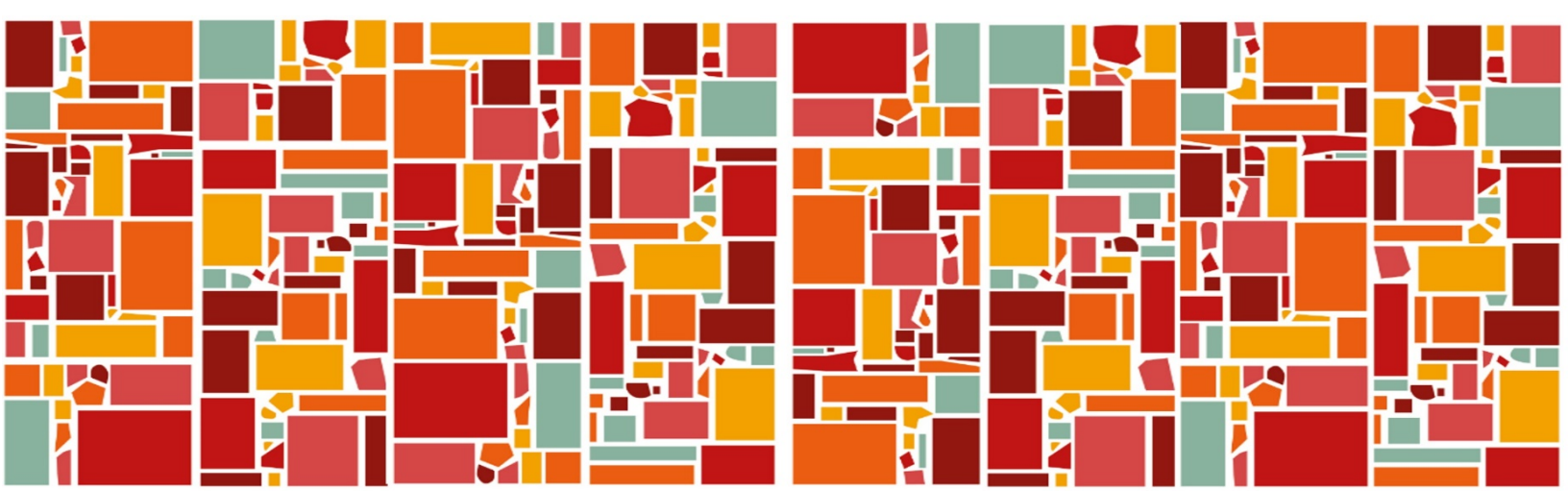


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Who We Are



Immanuel Baptist Church of Wiesbaden, Germany (IBC-Wiesbaden) establishes this constitution to express the principles of our faith in service to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Our God is a God of order, and this document ensures IBC-Wiesbaden is governed in an orderly manner consistent with the teachings of the Bible. Although we believe the local church to be autonomous and governed by its members, we also recognize the importance of association and cooperation with other like-minded churches and organizations. In our case that is most clearly indicated by our membership in the International Baptist Convention and the Bund Evangelisch-Freikirchlicher Gemeinden in Germany.

As an international multi-cultural church, we provide worship, spiritual growth, and fellowship opportunities for English-speaking followers of Christ and for those exploring a personal faith in Christ. Our desire is to be faithful to the teaching of scripture, sensitive to the moving of the Spirit and to excel in showing God's love and grace for every person. As a "Body of Believers in Christ" our church will be known as the *Immanuel Baptist Church of Wiesbaden, Germany im Bund Evangelisch-Freikirchlicher Gemeinden in Deutschland, K.d.ö.R.*

We welcome all to worship with us regardless of where you are in your faith journey. We accept, to membership, all who have come to a personal, genuine faith in Jesus Christ, recognizing some may have differing views in matters of faith that are non-essential to salvation. Members are encouraged to seek to preserve the unity of the church by holding these differing convictions without being divisive and seeking to honor the leaders of the church.



What We Believe

Trinity



We believe that God is one being, existing eternally as a unity of three distinct persons: the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit. Each person is fully, equally, eternally God, possessing the very same nature and attributes. In God's great work of salvation each member of the Trinity accomplishes distinct aspects of God's eternal plan to save sinners, who are spiritually dead, through faith in Jesus Christ. ([John 1:1-5](#))

God, the Father



We believe there is only one living and true God. He is the eternal, infinite, all-knowing, all-powerful, all-wise Creator and supreme ruler of heaven and earth. He is loving, righteous, just, and merciful. In perfect love, He is concerned in our affairs and hears and answers prayer. Because He loves us, He sent Jesus Christ, His Son, to save all from sin and death. He is worthy of our worship, love, and trust. ([John 3:16-18](#))

Jesus Christ



We believe that Jesus Christ is God's one and only Son, who is fully God and fully man. He was with God the Father in the beginning of all creation and is eternal. That He was born of a virgin birth and was sinless. Because He was sinless, He was the perfect sacrifice for our sins, which He took on Himself on the cross. We believe that He died in our place for our sin, that He rose again, and that He ascended into heaven. We believe His promise that He will return with power and glory. Through our faith in Him, He completed everything necessary for us to be saved from our sins and return to our Heavenly Father. ([John 14:6](#))

Holy Spirit



The third person of the Trinity and also fully God, the Spirit was sent by the Father to reveal and glorify Jesus Christ. He is the comforter, brings scripture to our minds, teaches, and strengthens us until the return of Jesus in all His glory. He is active in turning the hearts of those who do not yet know Christ to place their trust in Him. He is continually with a believer in Jesus as a constant companion. He helps shape the life of the believer to produce the “Fruit of the Spirit” as described in [Galatians 5:22-23](#) and gives spiritual gifts for the benefit of the Body of Christ. The Holy Spirit enables a believer in Jesus to lovingly and boldly share the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. ([John 14:26](#))

The Bible



We believe the Bible is the absolute inspired Word of God, which consists of the 39 books of the Old Testament and 27 books of the New Testament written by human authors inspired by the Holy Spirit. The Bible is complete, final, and the absolute authority and standard against which all Christian belief and all behavior is measured. It is given to us so that we might know and enjoy God and walk in His ways. It shows us the path to life and makes clear the path of sin and death. ([2 Timothy 3:15-17](#))

Salvation



Every human being is born in rebellion against God. The Bible calls this “sin” and the result of our rebellion is that we are spiritually “dead” and separated from God. We are powerless of earning our salvation and require God’s love and mercy. Through this great love, God sent Jesus Christ, as the perfect sacrifice for our rebellion. Through His death, burial, and resurrection, we can experience new birth and eternal life. There are no works that can possibly earn our redemption. It is a gift of grace through faith in Christ. He alone is our hope, our Savior, and our Lord. In Him alone can salvation be found. ([Romans 6:23](#))

Ordinances



We believe Jesus established two ordinances for believers:

Believer's Baptism – An act of obedience and a joyful public expression of faith, which is a visual testimony of our new life and personal commitment as a disciple of Jesus Christ. That baptism is by immersion “in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit” as a symbol of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; the end of our old way of life and the beginning of our new life in Christ. ([Colossians 2:12](#))

The Lord's Supper (communion) – Taking the Lord's Supper together is to remind believers of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for us, regarding His death, burial, resurrection, and future return. Unlike baptism, which is a one-time act of obedience, the command to celebrate Lord's Supper together is to be kept regularly and continually by His church. ([Luke 22:14-20](#))

Sharing the Gospel



In response to the Great Commission, and as an international sending church, we accept the responsibility of sharing the Gospel and making disciples of Jesus Christ, to all nations and all people. We believe Christ is our model in sharing the Gospel in both word and deed. We believe that every person who comes to faith in Christ is called to be both a disciple and a disciple-maker. This calling challenges us to be bold in sharing the Good News of salvation in Jesus alone and to live in a way which reflects His incredible love and grace. As we live and serve in community with others, we must communicate who and why we serve. ([Matthew 28:16-20](#))

The Family



Marriage and the family were instituted by God with our first parents, Adam and Eve. That marriage is between male and female as the foundation of the family and the basic structure of human society. ([Genesis 2:24](#))

Local Church



We believe the local church is an independent assembly of disciples of Jesus, called to share the Word of God (Bible), follow the leadership of the Holy Spirit and be a launching pad for ministry which impacts our city, our country, and our world. Immanuel Baptist Church is an internationally diverse “Mosaic of Believers” that embraces our cultural differences. We believe those differences make us stronger and help us better understand God as we learn from one another.

We believe that all churches, in every country, are entitled to freedom of religious expression, while respecting man’s laws that do not conflict with the commands of God.

We seek the opportunities to work together with other like-minded Christian churches and organizations to accomplish God’s work locally, nationally, and internationally. ([1 Corinthians 12](#))

Church Membership



Church membership is only for those who have personally experienced God’s saving grace and accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord and have followed Christ in baptism by immersion. As part of our covenant relationship as members of the Body of Christ, we seek to grow in our own faith, to encourage other believers to grow closer to God, to raise our families in Christ, and to serve His church at IBC-Wiesbaden. ([Hebrews 10:19-25](#))



Immanuel Baptist Church-Wiesbaden celebrates our diverse cultural differences as an international church. Regardless of culture or heritage, we are one with Christ. In our oneness, we believe it is important to commit ourselves to one another as disciples and brothers and sisters in Christ.

The Old and New Testaments reveal that God and His followers are a People of Covenants (commitments). God's first covenant was with Israel through Abraham, and then God established a new covenant with the church through Jesus Christ. As brothers and sisters in Christ and as members of Immanuel Baptist Church Wiesbaden, we make the following covenant with God and one another concerning the following areas of the Gospel and our life:

Commitment to God



Our relationship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, being one God, is the most important aspect of our life. We believe and will follow His first and greatest commandment, to love the Lord our God with our all our hearts, all our souls and all our minds and to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness ([Matthew 22:37-40](#)). We will place nothing ahead of God. This includes our time, relationships, work, money, or possessions, for in doing so we make them idols and more important than God.

Commitment to Our Personal Life



Our personal relationship to Jesus is the model for our relationship with our families, fellow believers, friends, and all people. It is impossible to live or teach what we do not know and believe in our hearts. We seek to grow in a more meaningful personal relationship with Christ through daily prayer, studying the Bible, and living out what God commands, with His help. Everything we do, we do for Jesus and to honor God. All things that do not honor God, we desire to remove from our lives. We will strive to have the pure love of Jesus for everyone. ([Colossians 3:17](#))

Commitment to Our Families



Marriage and the family were instituted by God with our first parents, Adam and Eve ([Genesis 2:24](#)). God views the family critical to preserve His people and to be an example to society. We seek to teach our families about the saving grace of salvation in Jesus alone and a Biblical worldview in place of a worldly view, which is in direct opposition to God. As husbands, we commit to lead and love the family like Jesus leads and loves the Church. As wives, we respect and support our husbands as they lead and love as Jesus. As children, we will respect and obey our parents. We commit to being examples to a broken world of a Christ-centered family. ([Ephesians 5:7 - 6:4](#))

Commitment to the Christian Community



“As I have loved you, love one another” is Christ’s command to His followers. We commit to pray for one another and to support one another through faithfully meeting together, aiding those in need, encouraging and discipling one another, and celebrating and praising God and thanking Him for His goodness in our lives together. To reflect Christ’s love to others, we commit to living out the Beatitudes and to pursue relationships characterized by humility, mercy, forgiveness, and a peace-making spirit. We recognize that all we have is from the Lord and commit to contribute cheerfully and faithfully to support the ministry of the church. ([Matthew 5:1-16; Romans 12:9-16](#))



Commitment to the World



Jesus said, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” As an international sending church, we commit to furthering God’s kingdom on earth by sharing the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ; making disciples of Jesus Christ, which is a life-long pursuit; reflecting our Savior Jesus Christ by being in the world but not of the world; and ensuring our actions testify to whom we belong, Jesus Christ; and do not hinder our ability to be a witness of the Good News of Jesus Christ. ([Matthew 28:19-20](#)) ([Colossians 3:17](#))



Membership



Membership in the local church is an expression of our commitment to God and each other. As members of this body of believers, we seek to encourage one another in five areas of our walk in Christ; putting God first in our life, growing in our personal relationship with God, working together to strengthen our families; serving and supporting IBC-Wiesbaden, and reaching out into the world with the Good News of Jesus Christ. Membership at IBC-Wiesbaden connects us as a “Mosaic of Believers” as a beautifully rich international culture body.

Those who regularly attend Immanuel, but have not yet taken the step of membership, are welcome to participate freely in church life and many areas of service. We rejoice in each person who is a part of the IBC family and are thankful for the opportunity to be on this journey together. However, by taking that step of membership, we communicate our commitment to this local Body of Christ and our willingness to be accountable, to the Body, as we use the gifts and talents which God has given ([Romans 12:4-8](#)). Membership provides various opportunities of service as well as the right to vote on church business.

IBC-Wiesbaden offers two types of membership: full membership and associate membership. Membership is open to any believer in Jesus Christ who is at least 15 years old.



Full Membership



To qualify for full membership of IBC Wiesbaden, one must be a believer and follower of Jesus Christ, accepting Him as both their Lord and Savior and:

- be baptized by immersion by his/her own choice (Believers' Baptism).
- If previously baptized (Believers' Baptism), by profession, statement of faith, or by letter of transfer or recommendation.
- accept the constitution and by-laws of IBC-Wiesbaden and read and sign the "*Membership Covenant*" document (Appendix 1).

Once signed, the pastor and/or the deacons, at a business meeting or at the conclusion of a Sunday morning worship, will present those desiring membership to the church. A majority yes vote by the church, takes effect immediately.

Only full members may serve as a deacon, trustee, treasurer, or ministry team leader (including chairing any standing committees). In addition, only full members may serve as the primary teacher of a Sunday Bible Study.

Associate Membership



Associate membership is available to those who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, but who do not desire to change their local church or denominational affiliation.

To qualify, as with associate membership, the candidate must:

- come by profession or statement of faith that Jesus Christ is their Lord and Savior or by letter of recommendation from their current or former church.
- accept the constitution and by-laws of IBC-Wiesbaden and read and sign the "*Membership Covenant*" document (Appendix 1).

Once signed, the pastor and/or the deacons, at a business meeting or at the conclusion of a Sunday morning worship, will present those desiring membership to the church. A majority yes vote by the church, takes effect immediately.



Organization



As a Congregational Church, the governance of IBC-Wiesbaden is entrusted in the members. Specifics of church membership are discussed in *Part 4 – “Membership”*. IBC-Wiesbaden is not under the control of any other religious organization but recognizes, supports, and is committed to cooperate with other Christian churches and organizations with whom we find commonality in Biblical teachings. IBC-Wiesbaden has chosen affiliation with two such organizations; the International Baptist Convention and the Bund Evangelisch-Freikirchlicher Gemeinden in Deutschland (Baptisten), with whom we have an ongoing partnership and who are our primary partners for furthering the gospel beyond the local church.

Doctrinal Authority



Immanuel Baptist Church - Wiesbaden accepts the Bible as the sole authority regarding matters of faith and theology. That scripture is profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness so that God's church may be complete and equipped for every good work. ([2 Timothy 3:16](#)) The Bible contains God's word to man, which is essential to the beliefs of Baptist churches and disciples of Christ as indicated in *Part 2 - “What We Believe”*.



Church Officers



Pastor



Qualifications: The role of the pastor is the role of an undershepherd. Christ remains our Shepherd and the head of His church. The pastor serves Christ and His church as someone who loves the local expression of the church universal. It is this love for the church and a calling to serve which motivates the pastor. In order to do so effectively, the Bible says that a pastor must have a high level of understanding of Biblical concepts and principles and must live a Christ-filled life. When the church selects a pastor, it has a responsibility to examine carefully the spiritual character and qualifications establish by the Lord in [1 Timothy 3:1-7](#) and [Titus 1:7-9](#).

Duties: The pastor has the spiritual responsibility of “keeping watch over your souls” and “will have to give an account” of their service to the church ([Hebrews 13:17](#)). In this context, the pastoral duties will include but are not limited to the following:

- Provide pastoral care (spiritual/emotional/physical) of the church.
- Teach the church during worship services.
- Officiate the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper.
- Officiate at church business meetings.
- Provide guidance to all church ministries, organizations, departments, and committees, helping to promote unity with the church’s overall vision and mission.
- Work closely with and provide direction to the deacons in the administration and care of the church and its members.
- Provide direction and be senior to all church staff members, whether as paid staff or volunteers.
- Engage outside the church to the local and international communities.

Pastor - Continued



Call: Whenever a vacancy occurs, the following procedure will be followed to call a new pastor:

- A pastor-search committee of at least five full members will be nominated by the deacons and approved by the church by majority vote.
- The pastor-search committee will advertise and announce the vacancy and receive applications and recommendations.
- After prayer and discussion, the committee will bring to the church one name at a time for consideration as a nominee. Nomination may only come to the church from the pastor-search committee.
- Upon nomination, the church will be given the opportunity to get to know the candidate. This may take place in a couple of stages but would normally include a physical visit to the church at which time there would be opportunity for the church to pose questions, hear the testimony of the candidate and get to know the candidate and their family. The church would have the opportunity to hear the candidate preach prior to a vote.
- Following the nomination, at a called business meeting, the church will vote by written ballot. A call to the nominee will be offered after a yes vote of 75 percent of voting members present (at least 50 percent). Only full members with at least 30 days of membership may vote.
- If a quorum is not met, the meeting will adjourn, without a vote. A new date will be set for new vote on the current Pastor nomination.
- Should the nominee fail to receive a 75 percent vote, the meeting will be dismissed without debate, and the committee will seek another candidate.
- Upon acceptance of the pastoral call, the pastor, the Chair of the Pastor Search Committee and the Deacon Chair will all sign a Pastor-Church Covenant.

Pastor - Continued



- The initial Pastor-Church Covenant is for two years. Prior to the end of this initial period, the deacons will provide an evaluation of the pastor's initial tenure to the Church Council and church members. At a church business meeting a vote of the church members will be held to terminate or make permanent the Covenant with the Pastor. A yes vote of 75 percent of those members present at the business meeting (at least 50 percent of full members) will be necessary to make the Pastor-Church Covenant permanent.
- If a yes vote of 75 percent is not achieved, the pastor will be given 30 days' notice of termination and the church will seek a new pastor.

Support: Pastoral support, responsibilities, and benefits shall be specified in the Pastor-Church Covenant. The covenant will be prepared by the Budget and Finance Committee, the Pastor Search Committee, and the deacons and will be presented to the church for approval no less than 2 weeks prior to Pastoral call vote. After church approval, the covenant will be signed by the pastor and the Body of Trustees.

Dismissal: We pray that the removal of the pastor never occurs. However, if the pastor is unable or unwilling to perform the duties of a pastor, dismissal of the pastor shall require by a specially called business meeting for that purpose. Voting shall be by written ballot, and dismissal will require a 75 percent yes vote of those full members present (at least 50 percent of full members). If dismissed, the pastor shall be given 30-days' notice. See Part 4 "Functional Areas - Church-Wide Meetings" regarding the type of meeting called.



Deacons



Qualifications: Biblical guidelines require that a deacon be highly spiritually committed. Before nominating a candidate for the office of deacon, it is the spiritual responsibility of the members of this church to consider candidates in the light of the qualifications as recorded in [1 Timothy 3:8-12](#). All nominees must be full members or willing to become full members and at least 25 years old at the time of ordination.

Duties: The New Testament teaches deacons are servants of the church. They are called to work alongside and with the pastor in fulfilling an important ministry to the church. Their duties will include but not be limited to the following:

- To coordinate with the pastor in all matters pertaining to the work and welfare of the church.
- To be responsible for overseeing ministries and programs.
- To watch over the church to ensure unity of the Spirit and to serve the advancement and interest of the Gospel and the church.
- To assist with church ordinances of preparing and serving the Lord's Supper and to help the pastor during baptismal services.
- To serve as Deacon of the Week in support of Sunday services and point of contact for the church during the week.
- To arrange for sermons when the church is without a pastor unless the church has otherwise provided interim pastoral support.
- To serve with the pastor as a council of advisors in matters of church discipline.
- To serve as the church's personnel committee. All employed persons, other than the pastor, shall be recommended to the church by the deacons and approved for employment by the church. Employees and staff members work for the pastor and aided by the deacons.
- To collect, count, and deposit all offerings.

Deacons – Continued



Election: It is recommended there be one (1) deacon for every 6-10 church families or individual. When the church deems it necessary or when recommended by the pastor and/or deacons the following steps will be taken to elect additional deacons:

- The church shall recommend by written ballot the names of those they feel meet the qualifications of deacon. Ballots will list all full and associate members of sufficient age (25) and spiritual maturity. These ballots will be distributed via email and/or at a meeting, which has been announced during two consecutive Sunday worship services prior to the meeting. Ballots will be counted by two (2) deacons and/or the pastor. Five (5) votes will constitute a nomination. Spouses of currently serving deacons are not eligible for nomination unless spouse is an outgoing deacon.
- By unanimous vote the pastor and deacons may nominate a member to serve as deacon.
- Nominees will be review by the pastor and deacons to determine whether each nominee meets the biblical requirements. If so, each nominee will be contacted and advised of their nomination. Should a husband and wife both be nominated, it will be their decision as to which should continue in the nomination process.
- Each nominee will complete a doctrinal questionnaire prepared by the deacons and will be available to each church member. This questionnaire will determine the spiritual maturity of the deacon candidate.
- Each nominee will be interviewed by at least two (2) deacons or the pastor and one (1) deacon focusing on the questionnaire and duties of deacons.

Deacons – Continued



- After prayerful consideration, the deacons will bring to the church a list of nominees who they feel meet the biblical requirements. These nominees will give a public testimony at a regular Sunday worship service.
- Deacon nominees must be full members of the church prior to being ordained for deacon service.
- Deacons must be ordained prior to service. The pastor and deacons will make necessary arrangements for the ordination service.

Term of Office: Deacons elected will serve for a three-year term. After serving a term, deacons will become inactive for at least one year unless re-elected by the church for another term (The intent is for a deacon to have a one-year break before serving again). Husband and wife, as a rule should not serve at the same time. However, if both are nominated by the Pastor and deacons by unanimous consent, an exception can be made.

Deacon Officers: When practical, deacon officers should consist of a chair, vice-chair, and secretary. The deacon officers will be elected by the deacons annually. The church will be notified of the election results.

Meeting: The deacons are expected to meet monthly.

Inactive Deacons: It is recognized that there may be ordained deacons within the membership that have not been elected to serve currently. These deacons may assist the pastor or chair of deacons in the observance of church ordinances. Inactive deacons must be re-elected to actively serve.



Clerk



Qualifications: The church shall annually elect a clerk. The clerk must be at least an associate member of the church.

Duties: The duties will include but not limited to the following:

- To keep record of all official action of the church (digital is authorized).
- To maintain a registry of the names of members (active and inactive) with dates of admission, transfer, death, and a record of baptisms.
- To issue letters of membership transfer voted by the church and to preserve on file all communication and written official reports.
- To consolidate data and other requested information for inclusion in the annual report submitted to the clerk of the International Baptist Convention.
- To determine that a quorum, as indicated in this document, is present prior to the start of each business meeting.

If the clerk is not available at a business meeting of the church, the facilitator may name an acting clerk for that meeting.

Employees and Staff



All employed persons, other than the pastor, shall be recommended to the church by the deacons and approved for employment by the church. Approval is at a regular business meeting by majority vote. Employees and staff members shall be under the direct supervision of the pastor and aided by the deacons. Employees may be full-time, mini, or volunteer positions.

Treasurer



Qualifications: The church shall elect the Treasurer. The Treasurer must be a full member of the church.

Duties: Treasurers duties include but not be limited to the following:

- To maintain records, which account for all receipts and disbursements. All disbursements vouchers must include a signature by a deacon to be valid. All forms of digital signatures will be accepted.
- To promptly pay all bills. The Treasurer is authorized to pay all bills that are part of the approved budget.
- To remit, at least monthly, all funds received.
- To serve as a member of the Budget and Finance Committee.
- To coordinate with the Budget and Finance Committee to prepare required reports for presentation at business meetings.
- To prepare an itemized annual report of receipts and expenditures approximately 45 days after the end of the calendar year. This report shall be submitted for auditing, as arranged by the Budget and Finance Committee.
- To receive the empty offering envelopes after the money has been removed and counted.

Body of Trustees



The church shall elect three (3) full members to hold power of attorney for the Bund Evangelisch-Freikirchlicher Gemeinden in Deutschland (Bund) giving them authorization to act on behalf of the Bund and IBC. They shall have the actual care of any buildings owned by the church, but they will have no power to borrow money, to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without specific vote of the church authorizing such action. No decision can be made by these representatives without a vote of the church in a business meeting. Authorization comes through the Bund for this power of attorneys.

Ministries



The heart and soul of IBC-Wiesbaden are the many people who serve in a variety of ministries both inside and outside of the church. They bring to life the vision and calling of the church as they use their gifts and talents. Whether these acts of service are highly visible or known only to those directly impacted, each is crucial to who we are as a church and, most importantly, a way of giving glory and honor to our Heavenly Father. Ministry programs facilitate spiritual growth, discipleship, service, and missions.

Ministries are in one of three phases: *planning*, *active*, or *inactive*. Ministries reflect the current needs of the church. Even if there is a period in which a ministry is inactive, this doesn't imply that a ministry is unneeded or unimportant, but rather that a pause is helpful for any number of reasons. In those times, prayer and discernment will be used in determining when a ministry may be restarted.

There are ministries that are a priority to support the overall vision and mission of the church.

- Children's Ministry is a priority as our children are the future of the church. We are committed in supporting and assisting families in teaching and instructing them with a Biblical world view.
- Men's/Women's Ministries that support the challenges of men and women, by providing discipleship, outreach, prayer and fellowship opportunities.
- Bible Studies/Life Groups to nurture personal growth in God's Word.
- Missions for outreach and sharing the good news of Jesus.
- Welcome/Hospitality Ministries to ensure all who attend IBC-Wiesbaden feel welcome to the body of believers.
- Worship through song is a prayer and praise to our Lord and invites the Holy Spirit into our services.
- Prayer, and especially corporate prayer, is one of the most significant ways in which God speaks to His church. Providing opportunities for corporate prayer, as well as encouraging the prayer life of individuals.
- Singles Ministry to support those who may be without spiritual support and fellowship.

Ministries - Continued

We strongly encourage all who call IBC their spiritual home to prayerfully consider where the Lord is calling them to serve. Ministry leaders and Sunday school teachers must be full members.

Committees & Teams



The ministry of a church is ministry that most often can and should take place within the context of a team of people. Historically, that desire to work in teams has been expressed through the work of “committees.” In our day, we speak more often of “teams” rather than “committees”, although either word can be a helpful designation for a small group of people working together for a specific length of time for a specific purpose. Teams may be established in a variety of ways:

- **Ministry Teams** - Ministry leaders will usually seek to have a team of people whom they gather to assist in the ministries for which they have responsibilities. These teams will fluctuate in size and make-up, depending on the needs of the ministry and the availability of volunteers. Examples of this kind of team would be areas of ministry such as Children’s Ministry, Young Adult Ministry, Music Ministry, Men’s and Women’s Ministry among others.
- **Special Teams** - The establishment of a team may be initiated by the Pastor, deacons, or the church body (usually at one of the regularly scheduled meetings) in order to facilitate the ministry of the church in a particular way that is beyond the parameters of established ministries. This kind of team might plan a special activity, explore a particular ministry opportunity, or deal with a specific situation. These kinds of teams will be formed with a beginning and ending in mind for the work of the team. They are not standing teams.
- **Standing Teams** - The final type of team is the Standing Team or Committee. These teams are established for the work of the church which should always take place in the context of a team. Whereas ministry leaders can choose their own teams and the makeup of those teams may change considerably within a relatively short amount of

Committees & Teams Continued

Standing Teams - Continued

time, standing teams or committees are made up of members who are voted on by the church. Standing committee members must be members of the church (either full or associate).

The team chair may be selected by the team or by the church but must be a full member. No person shall chair more than one standing committee/team. Team members will serve a three-year term of service, with no more than half of the team members rotating off in any given year. Team members may serve up to two three-year terms before taking a minimum of a one-year break, with the exception of the Budget and Finance Team.

Current Standing Committee(s)/Team(s)

Budget and Finance Team: Consists of four to six (4-6) members and is responsible for oversight of the finances of the church. The Treasurer is an ad hoc member of the team. This would include:

- Preparing and presenting the proposed annual church budget. The first draft of this budget will usually be presented for discussion at the last Quarterly Meeting of the year. The church will have at least two weeks to view the proposed budget. At this meeting, the budget will be discussed, and changes proposed. The final version of the budget is then voted on without discussion at the first Quarterly Meeting of the new year. If there are changes to the final budget which amount to more than 2000€, then the floor should again be opened to discussion.
- This team will monitor income and expenditures and overall church financial health.
- To prepare a record of contributions.
- To prepare and distribute individual records of contribution.
- If needed, will be responsible, together with the pastor and deacons, for promoting a church stewardship program.
- Assist Treasurer as needed.

Church-Wide Meetings



Worship Services:

Worship Services are conducted each Sunday except where conditions necessitate a change. The Pastor and deacon body will determine temporary changes if needed. Worship will include regular celebration of church ordinances under the leadership of the Pastor. Other special services may be conducted as authorized by the Pastor and deacons.

Business Meetings:

Frequency: Will be conducted quarterly and placed on the church calendar at the beginning of each year. Special business meetings may be called by the pastor and/or the deacons or by request of 25 percent of full members of the church to the pastor and/or deacons.

How to Call: Called business meetings may take place in person at the regularly scheduled time of the meeting or virtually.

Facilitator: The pastor will facilitate all the business meetings. If the pastor is absence or at the pastor's request, the deacon chair will be the facilitator. In the case of an interim pastor, the deacon chair will serve as the facilitator. In cases of conflict of interests, the church will seek an outside facilitator. This facilitator must have the approval of the pastor and the deacon chair.

Voting: All action taken at business meeting will be by a majority of members present (full or associate), except as may be otherwise specified in the by-laws or constitution of the church. Absentee or proxy ballots will not be accepted. Expenditures of non-budget items of more than 500€ must be approved by the church.

Church-Wide Meetings - Continued

Business Meeting - Continued

Notice: Advance notification of a called business meeting must be provided to the church during two consecutive Sunday worship services prior to the meeting. The purpose of the meeting will be stated beforehand and shall be limited to the purpose stated in the notices. Voting on the reception of new members and votes terminating membership for any reason other than disciplinary may be taken at any meeting of the church body without notice.

Procedures: The model of consensus is the method of decision making and for procedural meetings. After reasonable discussion, any member may call for a vote on the matter at hand. Consensus does not imply unanimous voting but allows for more participation and discussion.

Quorum: A quorum is defined as the minimum number of members required to call a meeting. The following are the quorum requirement of the various meetings.

- *Regular business meeting:* 15 percent of members. If quorum is not met, the meeting will adjourn.
- *Change to constitution, by-laws:* 30 percent of members. If quorum is not met, meeting will adjourn, without a vote. A new date will be set for new vote. Only full members who have been on the rolls for at least 30 days may vote.
- *Call/dismissal of pastor or church closure:* 50 percent of members. If quorum is not met, the meeting will adjourn, without a vote. A new date will be set for new vote. Only full members who have been on the rolls for at least 30 days are eligible to vote.

Ministerial Licensing



Any person who feels called to the Gospel ministry may make a public declaration to the church in respect to a desire to be licensed. The individual must appear before the pastor and deacons for examination and counseling. Upon recommendation of the pastor and deacons and approval by the church, the license is granted. License may be revoked by the same process.

Church Council



Members:

Consists of the pastor (chair), church pastoral staff, deacon chair (vice chair), all ministry leaders, and all committee chairs. A majority of council members must be present to conduct business.

Responsibility:

Will schedule and coordinate all activities of the church. The church council is responsible for identifying and setting goals to meet the needs of the church as well as overseeing the establishment and development of all programs. Council proposals, which require a new activity or action will be presented to the church for implementation at a regularly scheduled business meeting, except in cases specified within this document.

Meeting:

Will meet quarterly shortly before the regularly scheduled business meeting. Any council member can request an additional council meeting should a need arise.

Church Year



The church calendar and fiscal year begins on January 1 and ends December 31.

Constitutional Recordkeeping



Every church member shall be given access to a copy of this constitution and by-laws (printed or digital). The clerk of the church shall keep a copy of the constitution and by-laws as a permanent record. All approved amendments or revisions shall be assembled by the clerk for distribution to church members and for placement in the church file.

Changes to Constitution



The IBC-Wiesbaden Constitution and/or by-laws may be changed at any business meeting of the church once proper notice has been given. The proposed changes must be written and presented to the church council. The church council will present the changes to the church at a business meeting. Proper notice shall consist of providing a copy, which may be digital, of the proposed changes to each full member at least one month prior to the meeting when a vote on the proposed changes is taken. The constitution and/or by-laws may be changed by an approving vote of two-thirds (2/3) of quorum of full members present at the meeting where changes are presented (see *Church-wide Meetings* section for definition of quorum).

Adoption of any changes to the constitution and/or by-laws will supersede previously versions, immediately following the vote.

Minor grammatical changes that provide no substantive change may be approved by a majority vote of the deacon body.

Closure of Church



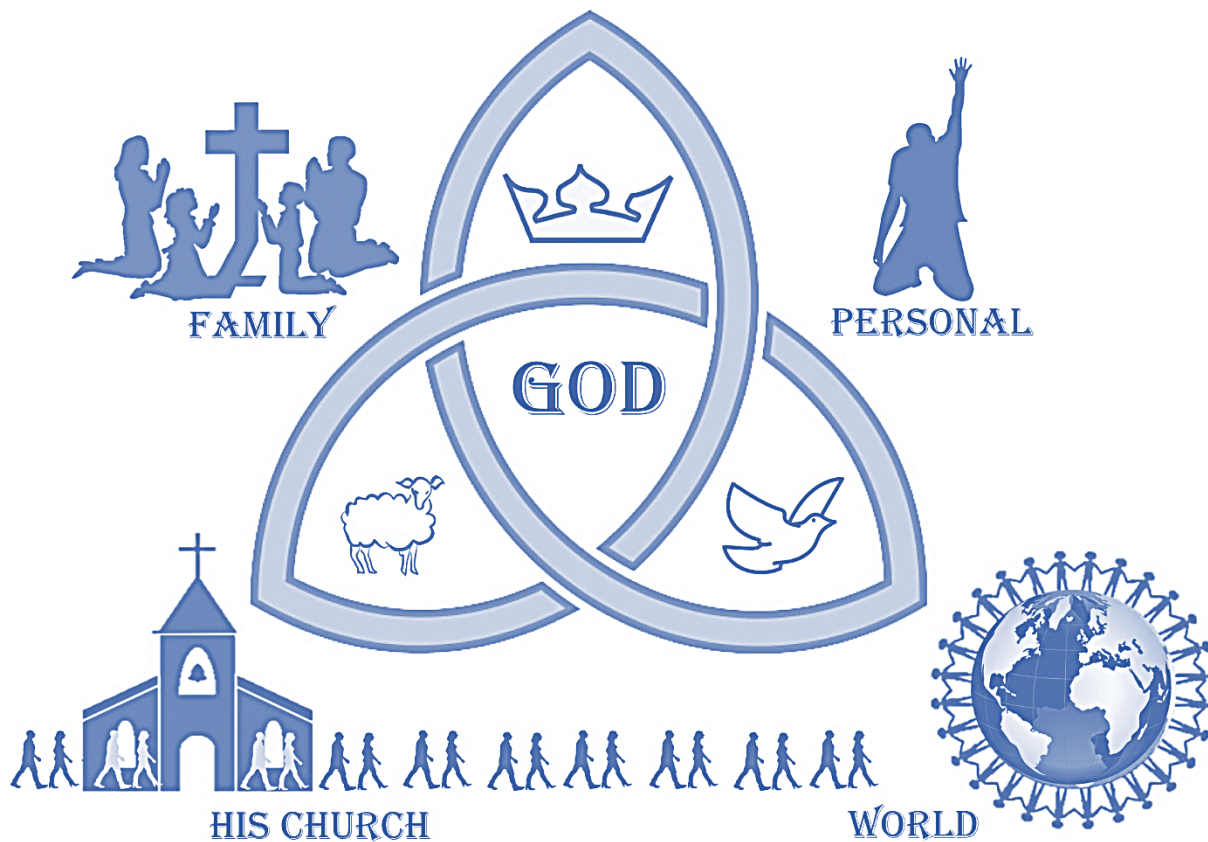
The church may be closed by an affirmative vote of 75 percent of the full members present, the quorum requirements are met, and voting at a meeting called for this purpose. Advance notification of a called business meeting must be provided to the church during the worship service on two consecutive Sundays preceding the meeting.

In the event Immanuel Baptist Church-Wiesbaden ceases to exist as a church, the church leadership will seek appropriate advice from International Baptist Convention and the Bund Evangelisch-Freikirchlicher Gemeinden in Germany for handling legal issues such as disposal of assets. Remaining assets after the payment of any debt will be sent to the International Baptist Convention.

Appendix 1



Membership Covenant



The Covenant



We are committed to be a place *of discipleship* for those who call Immanuel Baptist Church their spiritual home. As followers of Jesus Christ, we seek to encourage, support, and disciple one another in our spiritual journey. This is more than a commitment to a church, rather it is a covenant with the people who assemble in the name of Jesus Christ. Through this covenant, we want to emphasize aspects of our life in which we can encourage and support one another as *followers of Jesus*.

God

We seek to have God at the center of our life. We believe and will follow His first and greatest commandment, to love the Lord God with our all our hearts, all our souls and all our minds and to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Personal Life

Our personal relationship with Jesus is the model for our relationship with our families, fellow believers, friends, and all people. It is impossible to live or teach what we do not know and believe in our hearts. We seek to have a meaningful personal relationship with Christ through prayer and study of the Bible.

Family

Marriage and the family were instituted by God with our first parents, Adam and Eve; one husband and one wife. God views the family critical to preserve His people and to be an example to society. As husbands, wives, and children, we seek to have a family centered in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and centered in the teachings of the Bible. We seek to teach our families about the saving grace of salvation in Jesus alone and a Biblical worldview.

His Church

We seek to pray for one another and to support one another through faithfully meeting together, aiding those in need, encouraging and discipling one another, and celebrating and praising God and thanking Him for His goodness in our lives together. To reflect Christ's love to others, we seek to live out the Beatitudes and to pursue relationships characterized by humility, mercy, forgiveness, and a peace-making spirit.

World

We strive to further God's kingdom on earth by sharing the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We strive to further God's kingdom on earth by sharing the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ; making disciples of Jesus Christ, which is a life-long pursuit; reflecting our Savior Jesus Christ by being in the world but not of the world; and ensuring our actions testify to whom we belong, Jesus Christ; and do not hinder our ability to be a witness of the Good News of Jesus Christ.