

The Charter
of
Russian Evangelical Baptist Church of
Shakopee

*“...a wise man's heart discerneth both time and
judgment”*
Ecclesiastes. 8:5

Shakopee, MN
USA

March 2003

I. NAME, LOCATION AND DENOMINATION OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

- 1.1 The Russian Evangelical Baptist Church of Shakopee - is a voluntary association of believers of the Evangelical-Baptist denomination united for joint fellowship, confession and worship of God, spiritual growth, preaching of the Gospel, education of children and youth in the spirit of The Bible, service of mercy and charity.
- 1.2 Location of The Church:
1205 E 10th Ave.
Shakopee, MN 55379
Tel. (952) 496-0578
- 1.3 Denomination - Evangelical Christians-Baptists.
- 1.4 The basis of the creed of The Church is The Bible - canonical books of The Old and New Testament (The Gospel) of the Synod edition.
- 1.5 The Church does not participate in ecumenical movement.
- 1.6 The Church recognizes obedience to all laws of the country, if they do not limit performance of duties of our Christian faith. The Church prays for the Government, that it, according to the will of God, uses the entrusted authority in the way to keep peace and justice (Romans. 13:5,7; Acts 5:20; 1Timothy 2:1-4)
- 1.7 The church is a juridical person, and from the moment of registration, it has a separate property, independent balance, seal, stamps and forms with its own name and symbolics. It has bank accounts and the right to make contracts on its own behalf, to accrue property and non-property rights and has responsibilities, to be the plaintiff and respondent in the court of law. The Church has also other rights prescribed by the laws of the country concerning juridical persons.
- 1.8 Creditors cannot make any claims to the movable and immovable property of the divine service purpose. The Church is not responsible for the obligations of the members as well as the members of The Church are not responsible for the obligations of The Church.
- 1.9 The decisions of The Church and punishment of its members cannot be appealed against in the court of law, as The Congregation only is competent to resolve issues of the internal life of The Church. (Mathew 16:19; 1Corinthians

6:1-2)

II. GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND MAJOR FORMS OF ACTIVITY

2.1 Goals of the Church:

- a) Upbringing of believers in purity of the Evangelical doctrine through sermon, prayer, Bible study and fulfillment of what is written in it;
- b) Assistance in spiritual and moral revival of the people, as well as development and strengthening of unity between the members of The Church;
- c) Joint confession and spreading of the Christian teaching by believers through preaching of the Gospel to all people;
- d) Maintenance and strengthening of dogmatic and spiritual unity and brotherly fellowship with churches of the Evangelical-Baptist denomination;
- e) For achievement of the specified goals The Church arranges meetings for the Gospel preaching, prayer, Scriptures study, recitation of poems, psalms and declamations. The integral part of the divine service is the common, choral, and solo singing accompanied by musical instruments (Acts 5:24; Phil. 1:27; 2Pet. 3:18; Ps.149)

2.2 Objectives of The Church:

- a) Preaching of the Gospel to all peoples;
- b) Assistance in organizing new churches of the Evangelical Christians-Baptists and their further both spiritual and material development;
- c) Participation in development of the system of preparation of ministers as well as the system of missionary, charitable and publishing activities and their material base;
- d) Representation and assertion of the interests of The Church and its members, inside the country, as well as on the international level;
- e) Education of believers for achievement of sanctity, Christian godliness and fulfillment of everything in life Jesus Christ commanded to;
- f) Teaching children, youth and adults the doctrine and exhortation of the Lord at Sunday schools;
- g) Free attendance in divine services, except for congregational meetings, is provided to all who wish to attend, including children;
- h) In view of the large corrupt influence of secular public schools on children, the members of The Church have the right to home-schooling or Christian school education.

2.3 The major forms of activity of The Church are:

- a) Construction, purchase and maintenance of buildings and structures, other sites and objects specially intended for divine services, preaching of the Gospel and prayer meetings;
- b) Conducting divine services in the Houses of Prayer and its premises, in other places that are put at The Church's disposal for these purposes, in establishments and at the enterprises of church organizations, cemeteries and crematoriums, as well as dwelling premises;
- c) Conducting divine services in therapeutic-preventive and medical establishments, in children's homes, nursing homes, law enforcement agencies which carry out criminal punishments as deprivation of freedom, at the request of the citizens serving there, on premises specifically given for these purposes by the administration. Conducting of divine services on premises of the law enforcement agencies is permitted with observance of the requirements of the criminal legislation of the USA;
- d) Realization of communication with churches through visiting, information, correspondence;
- e) Organization and celebration of spiritual music and singing festivals, conducting lectures, watching movies and videos, holding conferences and seminars of religious contents, mass evangelizations and charity missions;
- f) Organization of Bible study courses and spiritual-counseling centers, as well as Christian schools of general education and musical circles;
- g) Holding conferences and seminars on preparing and improvement of professional skills of the preachers, missionaries, teachers and others ministers;
- h) Edition and distribution of the Christian literature, preparation of Christian TV- and radio programs;
- i) The church can have funds of Good News Mission, charities, mercy and others.

2.4 For realization of the regulatory activity, the church has the right:

- a) To participate in the State bodies discussion of issues pertaining to The Church activity;
- b) To enter international Unions, Association and Alliances, the activity of which meets the regulatory purposes of The Church;
- c) To make contracts on cooperation and joint activity with foreign charitable and other type of organizations;
- d) To take part in organization and work of international conferences, seminars and meetings on the issues of the regulatory activity of The Church;
- e) To invite foreign citizens for professional participation in divine services, evangelizations, for teaching and other activity and experience exchange;
- f) To have its own printed press and to establish mass media;
- g) To use on-air time of TV- and radio broadcasting for Christian radio- and TV-shows;

- h) To form educational groups and to organize study and training overseas;
- i) To produce, acquire, export, import and distribute religious literature, other printed editions, including electronic, magnetic and other carriers, subjects of religious purpose, and also audio- and video-production of religious purpose;
- k) To create its own organizations for charity, study and distribution of religious literature, missionary and other spiritual-enlightening activity foundations;
- l) To establish and support international contacts and connections;
- m) To organize individual and group trips overseas, to invite foreign guests and missionaries;
- n) To turn to citizens and organizations, including foreign ones, for voluntary donations and to receive them;
- o) To organize children's and youth camps, including evangelization camps;
- p) To create departments for conducting construction and reconstruction of objects of religious purpose.

2.5. In its regulated activity The Church adheres to the principles of the public consent and inter-confessional mutual respect and dialogue between people

III. ORDER OF FOUNDATION, STRUCTURE AND ADMINISTRATION

3.1 The church was created on the basis of voluntary will of the revived people of conscious age for joint confession and spreading of faith.

3.2 The members of The Church must be believers in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, which have experienced spiritual revival, accepted Holy Water Baptism (through immersion) and living a holy life.

3.3 The admission of the members of The Church is carried out by decision of The Church after preliminary interview with the ministers.

3.4 On the basis of the Bible doctrine, parents - the members of The Church - have the right to bring up their children both at home and in church, and they are responsible for it before God. If necessary, parents have the right to punish (discipline) their children with a rod of discipline on the basis of The Holy Scriptures (Proverbs 13:24,25; 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; 29:15,17; Ephesians 6:4; Hebrews 12:6-11).

3.5 The Church recognizes, that the use of an oath is forbidden to Christians (Matthew 5:34-37)

3.6 The Church recognizes, that no compulsion should be applied to those who by incentive of their conscience ask to exempt them from carrying arms while in the military service (Rom. 13:5, 7; Acts 5:20; 1Tim. 2:1-4).

3.7 The members of The Church may not use tobacco, drugs and be drug dealers, drunkards, homosexuals, lesbians, people practicing bestiality, be in the same-sex marriages, sorcerers, fortune-tellers, spiritists, persons making abortions, and also those who supports such.

3.8 The members of The Church have the right:

- a) To be elected and to elect administration bodies of The Church according to the requirements of The Bible;
- b) To bring in offers, remarks, applications to all bodies of The Church on the issues related to their activity;
- c). To ask The Church for assistance in protection of their rights and lawful interests;
- d) To receive information on the activity of The Church in accordance with established procedure;
- e) To leave The Church at one's own will after the decision of The Member Assembly

3.9 The members of The Church must:

- a) Be guided by the Holy Scriptures in their activity;
- b) Fulfill this Charter and decisions of The Congregation;
- c) Strengthen authority of The Church and actively participate in realization of its tasks (Matthew 7:12, Acts 15:20)
- d) Support financial work of The Church (practice the tithe)

3.10 The supreme body of The Church management is The Member Assembly

3.11 The Member Assembly can be summoned by the decision of the pastor, The Church Council or on demand of not less than 10 % of the members of The Church. The decision of The Member Assembly is competent with the presence of more than a half of the members in the session. The decisions of The Member Assembly on all issues are made by open or secret voting, with the simple majority of votes of those who are present in the congregational meeting.

3.12 The decision of issues, such as elections of the presbyter, modification and additions to the Charter and termination of the activity of The Church are competent with the presence of the 2/3 of The Church members in the congregational meeting.

The issue is considered to be resolved, if 75 % of the members present in the congregational meeting have voted for it.

3.13 The Member Assembly is competent to make decisions on any issues of the activity of The Church.

3.14 The exclusive competence of Member Assembly is:

- a) Statement of the basic directions of the activity of The Church;
- b) Adoption of the Charter of The Church, modifications and additions to it;
- c) Adoption of the decision about the termination of the activity of The Church;
- d) Election of the Pastors and Deacons;
- e) Statement of the reports of the Head Pastor and The Auditing Commission;
- f) Election of The Auditing Commission;
- g) Admission and leaving of the members of The Church;
- h) Election and confirmation of The Church Council;
- i) Disciplinary punishment of the members of The Church;

3.15 In the period between congregational meetings, The Church Council is the supervisory body of The Church. The officially elected Pastors, Deacons, Preachers and other authoritative brothers are the members of the Council for the period of one year, with the subsequent re-election or confirmation.

3.16 The Church Council adopts decisions in its sessions, which are summoned by the Head Pastor as required. Special sessions of The Church Council are summoned on demand of the half of the members of The Council. The decisions of The Church Council are competent at the presence of the 2/3 of the members of The Church Council in its session. The decisions of The Church Council are adopted by open voting by the simple majority of votes. In the session of the Church Council either the Head Pastor or one of the members of Church Council preside.

3.17 The Church Council is accountable to The Member Assembly and executes its decisions. The responsibilities of The Council include:

- a) Consideration of the plans of the current activity of The Church and its budget with subsequent confirmation by The Member Assembly;
- b) Election of the structure of the executive board of The Church with the confirmation by The Member Assembly;
- c) Assignment and discharge of The Deputy Pastor, Assistant Pastor, as well as the managers of the departments at the suggestion of the Head Pastor;
- d) The decision of questions concerning property right of The Church to any property;

- e) Consideration of The Pastor's report, chiefs the of departments of the executive board of The Church about the accomplished work and acts of The Auditing Commission;
- f) Calling of The Member Assembly and formation of the agenda;
- g) Formation of the committees and commissions in various directions of the activities and confirmation of the estimate of their expenses.

3.18 The Church Council has the right to make decisions on other questions of the activity of The Church not included in the exclusive competence of The Member Assembly.

3.19 The management of the current activity of The Church is carried out by The Head Pastor or a Deputy Pastor which are elected by The Member Assembly for the period of four years by open or secret voting and are considered elected, having gathered 75 % of votes from the number of the members present in the member meeting; they can be re-elected earlier if necessary. The Pastor annually reports about his ministry before The Church. The Church can acknowledge his ministry satisfactory and confirm him for the further ministry by the majority of votes.

3.20 The Church has the right to pay salaries to its ministers.

3.21 The Pastor or a Deputy Pastor, as well as other Pastors of The Church are the spiritual caretakers and officials of The Church. They are re-elected or confirmed annually, or at the discretion of The Church at any time. They are responsible for service areas in The Church.

3.22 The Head Pastor has the right:

- a) To represent interests of The Church in all domestic and foreign organizations;
- b) To issue powers of attorney on behalf of The Church;
- c) To give assignments to the employees of the different departments of The Church;
- d) To carry out other powers assigned to him by The Church Council and The Member Assembly.

3.23 The Cashier, Treasurer, Secretary and Manager are elected by The Church Council and confirmed by The Member Assembly (preferably the Deacons of The Church).

3.24 The Auditing Commission of The Church audits financial-economic activity of The Church.

The functions of The Commission are as follows:

- a) To make regular audits of financial-economic activity of The Church and material assets at least once a year, making the Act of Audit in triplicate (for the Chairman of The Commission, Treasurer, Secretary) and reading it in the congregational meeting.
- b) The Commission, consisting of not less than three men, is elected in the annual reporting-elective meeting for the period of two years;
- c) The Commission has the right of access to all cash and inventory books for auditing purposes, and also audits a condition of the cash and property;
- d) The Chairman of The Commission presents the annual financial report, checked and signed by The Commission, to The Church during the annual reporting-elective congregational meeting;
- e) The commission is independent in its work, and is guided by aspiration for the benefit of The Church and God's business. Only the members of The Commission and, if necessary, the people involved by The Commission in maintenance of its effective work may take part in the work of The Commission. The information regarding the course of work of The Commission is not subject to disclosure up to the moment of the promulgation of the Audit Act in the congregational meeting.

IV. Property and financial-economic activity

4.1 The budget of The Church is formed at the expense of:

- a) Voluntary donations of the members of The Church and wills of private persons;
- b) Voluntary donations of other churches, organizations and private persons, including foreigners;
- c) Property transferred by private and legal persons;
- d) Income from publishing and enterprises that belong to The Church;
- e) Other sources allowed by the current legislation of the country.
- f) Donors, grantors and testators reserve the right of a special-purpose designation of donations.

4.2 The funds of The church are spent for the authorized purposes, including salary payments to the employees, tax payments and other payments into the budget and out-of-budget funds, compensation of expenses related to realization of the authorized activity of The Church, charitable and other purposes, not contradicting to the present Charter.

4.3 In the property of The Church there can be buildings, structures, subjects of religious purpose, objects of industrial, social, charitable and cultural - enlightening purposes, monetary funds and other property necessary for realization of the authorized activity.

4.4 In cases of and in the order established by the current legislation, The Church can receive land as its property.

4.5 For realization of the authorized activity The Church can hire persons and contractors necessarily having their insurance coverage.

4.6 The income of The Church is spent only for achievement of the goals determined by the present Charter and cannot be distributed between its members.

4.7 The church has the right to carry out enterprise activity and to create its own enterprises in the order established by the legislation.

4.8 A member or a group of the members of The Church consisting of up to 40 % of the general number of the members which have left The Church, do not have the right to claim to any share of movable or immovable property of this Church. In case of foundation of a branch or increase of The Church with 40 % and more of the members leaving it, the division of property and financial debts must be done on the pro-rata basis with the consent of both parties.

V. Modification and additions to The Charter

5.1 The decision on adoption, changes or additions to the present Charter must be made by The Member Assembly in the order determined by the present Charter and is subject to registration in the order established by the law.

5.2 The proposal on modification is accepted for consideration, if it was supported by not less than 1/3 of the members present in the congregational meeting. The voting for modification is carried out not earlier than in one month, and not later than in three months after acceptance for consideration of the proposal.

5.3. The present Charter can be modified in the congregational meeting at the presence of not less than 2/3 of the general number of the members of The Church and not less than 75% voting for modification.

5.4 The changes come into effect one month after The Member Assembly made the decision on modification.

5.5 The new changes must be made not earlier than six months after making the previous changes.

5.6 In case of changes of the laws concerning church, if they are not made against the principles proclaimed by Jesus Christ: " Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's. " (Matthew 22:21; Mark 12:17), the respective changes to the clauses of The Charter are made immediately.

VI. Termination of the activity of The Church

6.1 In case of dissolution of this Church all its debts will be completely paid out. The Church property and the possessions must not be distributed between the members of The Church or other people, but will be transferred, according to the common decision before the dissolution of The Church, to other similar nonprofit organizations. This meets requirements of the internal code of the USA from 1954 (part 501 C-1)

Head Pastor:	P.G.Telelyuyev
Members of The Council:	I.V. Bezrukikh
Secretary:	Y.A. Gamayunov

