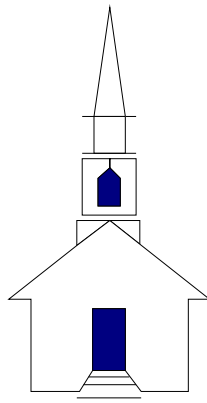


Organizing a

- *Fundamental*
- *Independent*
- *Baptist*



Church

The following is a suggestive outline to follow in the organizing of a Baptist Church.

I. PREPARATORY WORK

1. Gathering Material

Usually there is that stage of preparatory work leading to the organizing of a New Testament Church. Before we can organize a Baptist Church, we must have a company of immersed believers. In some communities we find a number of people called Baptists who have memberships in other Baptist churches. There may be those who are immersed believers, but who are not members of Baptist churches. There may be a number of believers who have not been immersed, but under faithful teaching will desire to become immersed. Then, too, we have the new converts who have been won to Christ under the worker in charge. From all such groups we gather material for a Baptist Church.

2. Preparation of Material

The worker in charge will need to teach his prospective material. It is understood that only immersed believers will be admitted into the membership. These should be taught the cardinal doctrines of the Christian Faith, with emphasis on the New Testament Church: Its membership, ordinances, officers, polity, discipline and function. Since this charter membership will be the core of the newly organized Baptist Church, special care should be exercised in the laying of solid foundations. So much of the future will depend on the charter membership.

3. Screening Material

It is not always easy to know the exact time to proceed with organization. Some rush it too quickly, while others prolong it beyond reason. Under normal conditions, we expect to see a new work organized within a period of six months from the time a worker begins his ministry in any given area, or community. Sufficient time should be given to allow for sufficient visitation and personal contact. The worker in charge should gain sufficient knowledge of each prospective member's Christian experience and personal beliefs to enable him to guard the charter membership. Usually in the preparatory period there is a "mission" stage with a secretary and a treasurer. If these are sufficiently mature, they could be requested to act with the Pastor in charge on the prospective membership.

II. PROGRAM or ORDER OF SERVICE

1. A Short Devotional Period Led by the Worker in Charge.

2. Choosing of a Moderator, or Chairman

It is wise to invite an older pastor — an ordained Baptist Minister with mature experience and able to advise in the organization of a Baptist church.

3. Moderator's remarks

Aa short address with a few well chosen words on the New Testament Baptist Church.

4. Resolution and Charter:

"Be it resolved that we the undersigned, guided as we believe by the Holy Spirit and relying upon His continued guidance and the blessing of the Triune God, do here and now, by this act constitute ourselves a New Testament Baptist Church to administer His ordinances, advance His worship, encourage Christian fellowship, and be governed by His will, as revealed in the New Testament, and to that end affix our signatures to this Charter."

(The above resolution should be typed on the head of a sheet of paper on which will be the affixed signatures of those composing the Charter Membership.)

5. Adoption of Constitution and Statement of Faith

Some prefer to postpone the adoption of a constitution and to make a few necessary by-laws, or resolutions to cover the immediate needs.

When a Constitution is adopted, we suggest that it be done so tentatively. If it is desired, this can be enlarged in the future to add more detail.

6. The Call of a Pastor

Now that the Church has been organized, it is in a position to call a pastor. Where possible, it is usually a case of inviting the worker in charge to accept this call.

7. The Visiting Moderator Vacates the Chair

... in favour of the newly called pastor, who then proceeds to the election of deacons. If there are no men qualified to act as Deacons, this can take place later on in the life of the Church as it grows.

— From the files of Dr. Harry Strachan

Community Baptist Church

Organization Events

Order of Service (3:30-5:00)

- Two Hymns & Prayer
- Special Music
- Call to Order and Introduce Moderator, Clerk & Baptist Pastors present.
- Reading of the Charter: Be it resolved that the undersigned, as guided by the Holy Spirit and relying upon His continued ministry, do here and now, by this act, constitute ourselves a New Testament Church and will function according to the doctrines taught, and in accordance with the pattern of churches found in the New Testament, thus descending from the rich heritage of Baptist churches. Said church will exist and function for the purpose of fulfilling the commission of Jesus Christ, which commission was delivered to His church and is recorded in the inspired Scriptures. Said church shall be known as Community Baptist Church.(signatures will then be read)
- Recognition of the charter members (all who signed charter will stand).
- Prayer of dedication.
- Orders of Business:
 - 1) Calling of a pastor.
 - 2) Adoption of the *Articles of Faith*
 - 3) Adoption of the *Constitution & By-Laws*
 - 4) Appointment of Trustees
 - 5) Motion to leave the charter open for signatures through December 31, 1995.
- Hymn
- Testimonials from area pastors re: recognition of CBC as a New Testament Church in keeping with the doctrines and practices of Baptist churches throughout the ages (3 two-minute statements).
- Special Music
- Preaching of the Charge
- Invitation
- Announcements & Offering
- Dismissal Hymn

Schedule of Events

3:00 to 3:30 pm — Signing of the Charter
3:30 to 5:00 pm — Organization Service
5:00 to 6:00 pm — Refreshments & Fellowship
6:00 pm — Lord's Supper Service for Chartered Members

Lord's Supper Service

Hymn, testimonies, special, Lord's Supper, testimonies, closing hymn.