

**BYLAWS**  
**\_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church**  
**Street Address**  
**City, GA Zip Code**

**ARTICLE I**  
**MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. General Provisions. \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church is comprised of persons who publicly profess a personal faith and belief in the Lord Jesus Christ, who have received believer's baptism, and who actively follow the Lord Jesus Christ in discipleship. Membership in this church is a sacred responsibility and requires full commitment to Jesus Christ and to the purposes of this church. The membership of this church reserves the right to determine who shall be members of this body and the conditions of such membership.

Section 2. Candidacy for Membership. Evidence of acceptance of Christ as Savior and Lord and believer's baptism are the two primary requirements for membership in this body, without regard to denominational affiliation. Any person who gives evidence of a regenerate heart and is willing to subscribe to the purpose, covenant, and confession of faith held by this church shall be accepted as a candidate for membership at any regular church service in any one of the following ways:

- (a) *By profession of faith and request for baptism.* Any person publicly professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ may, after receiving believer's baptism, be received into membership.
- (b) *By letter.* Any person in good standing in another Baptist church may be received into membership upon receipt by \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church of a letter of transfer from the church in which the individual's membership was previously held.
- (c) *By statement.*
  - a. Any person who has made a public profession of faith and has been immersed in baptism by a Baptist church, but who, because of loss of records or similarly unavoidable circumstances, cannot obtain a regular letter of transfer from that church, may be received into membership by statement.
  - b. Any person who has made a public profession of faith and has been baptized by immersion in a church of like faith and practice may be received into membership by statement.
  - c. Any person who has previously professed a personal faith and belief in the Lord Jesus Christ but has not received believer's baptism may be received into candidacy for membership on the condition that he or she must receive believer's baptism for acceptance into membership.
- (d) *By watchcare.* Any person who wishes to establish an affiliation with \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church but may not wish to transfer his/her membership may come under watchcare of the church. The person shall be extended many of the privileges of church members, especially nurture and care by the church membership and participation in church activities, but the person may not serve in a position which requires church membership of its holder and may not vote in business meetings of the church. The watchcare

membership of a person shall automatically terminate when that person is no longer a resident of the \_\_\_\_\_ area.

Section 3. *Vote on Membership.* All candidates for membership shall be voted on in a church business meeting. When approved, the clerk shall enter the names on the roll of the church. Should a candidate for membership not be approved, the matter shall be referred to the pastor and deacons, who shall investigate and bring a recommendation to the church, convened in business meeting, within thirty (30) days.

Section 4. *New Member Orientation.* New church members, regardless of how they become members, shall be expected to participate in the new member orientation program of the church.

Section 5. *Rights of Members.* Every member of the church is entitled to vote at all elections and upon all questions submitted to the church in business meeting. Members must be present to vote; voting by proxy and absentee voting are specifically prohibited. Every member of the church is eligible for consideration for the elective offices of the church, unless otherwise stated. Every member of the church may participate in the ordinances of the church as administered by the church.

Section 6. *Membership Accountability.* It shall be the desire of this church to hold its members accountable to god and to each other, as set forth in the church covenant. The church shall emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure be taken to assist in any troubling matter. The attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption rather than judgment. Should some serious condition exist which could cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, the pastor and the deacons shall meet with the member and shall take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accord with Matthew 18:15-17. If it becomes desirable for the church to take action to exclude the member, a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting at a church business meeting is required, after the member has been given opportunity to speak to the church body. Upon such an affirmative vote, the church may declare the person to be no longer in the membership of the church, and the member shall be so notified by the church clerk. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance. Any person excluded from the church may be restored to membership at a later time by vote of the church in regular business meeting, upon request of the excluded person, and upon evidence of the excluded person's repentance and reformation.

Section 7. *Termination of Membership.* Membership shall be terminated in any one of the following ways:

- (a) Death of the member.
- (b) Transfer by letter to another Baptist church. No letter of membership shall be granted to an individual.
- (c) Reasonable evidence of membership in another church.
- (d) Exclusion from membership by action of this church as set forth in Article I, Section 6, of these bylaws, provided every reasonable measure has already been taken to assist the member and keeping in mind that the attitude of church members toward one another is to be guided by a concern for redemption rather than judgment.

Section 8. Membership Records. Members are accepted into or dismissed from membership in the \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church at regular church business meetings. At such times, their names, along with the dates and methods of their acceptance or dismissal, shall be entered on the official membership roll of the church kept by the church clerk and on a duplicate roll kept in the church office by the office staff. A printed membership report shall be presented at each regular church business meeting, with careful notation of additions to and terminations of membership. Members who move to another community are expected, as soon as possible, to transfer their memberships to churches of like faith and practice in their new home communities, where they may continue to exercise the duties of Christian discipleship. The membership roll of the church shall be kept in two parts: resident members (those who live in \_\_\_\_\_ County or counties adjoining \_\_\_\_\_) and non-resident members (those who live outside \_\_\_\_\_ County or adjoining counties).

## **ARTICLE II CHURCH OFFICERS AND STAFF**

Section 1. General Provisions. The officers of this church are as follows: pastor, ministerial staff, deacons, clerk, treasurer, and trustees. In addition, if deemed advisable, the church may elect an assistant clerk and an assistant treasurer, who shall also be officers of the church. The pastor, ministerial staff, and deacons shall be elected as set forth in Article II, Sections 2, 4(a), and 5. The clerk and treasurer shall be nominated annually for one-year terms by the Committee on Nominations and elected by the church body, provided the nominees for these positions have been members of the church for at least one year. The trustees shall be nominated and elected as set forth in Article II, Section 8, of these bylaws.

Section 2. Pastor.

- (a) *Call of Pastor.* Whenever a vacancy in the pastorate occurs, a pastor shall be called by the church. The call of a pastor shall take place in a business meeting especially called for that purpose and shall be for an indefinite term of service. An announcement of the business meeting and its purpose shall be published in the church's newsletter, and an announcement made in at least two church services no less than one week prior to the business meeting to call a pastor.
- (b) *Procedure for Calling a Pastor.* When a vacancy occurs in the pastorate of the church, the Committee on Committees shall nominate a Pastor Search Committee, comprised of no fewer than seven (7) and no more than eleven (11) church members within thirty (30) days of the date the vacancy is announced. The nominees for the Pastor Search Committee shall be representative of the various organizations of the church and of the membership at large. Nominations to the Pastor Search Committee shall be presented by the Committee on Committees to the church membership for election in a business meeting. Should any person nominated not be elected, the Committee on Committees shall submit another nomination until, in this manner, a Pastor Search Committee of no fewer than seven (7) and no more than eleven (11) members shall be elected.

The Chairperson of the Committee on Committees shall convene the initial meeting of the Pastor Search Committee and serve as its temporary chairperson until the Pastor Search Committee elects its own officers.

It is the responsibility of the Pastor Search Committee to construct a profile of the church and its needs, to obtain information about all candidates regarding spirituality, doctrinal beliefs, education, experience, and compatibility and to recommend to the church the most suitable person available for the position. The Pastor Search Committee, recommend the pastor's compensation for approval by the church.

A candidate for a call shall be invited to the church for a weekend, during which he shall attend a fellowship, which will afford all church members the opportunity to meet him and his family, and he shall deliver a sermon to the church membership. At the conclusion of that service, the church shall meet in called business meeting in which a vote by written, secret ballot shall be taken on whether to call the candidate. An affirmative vote of at least eighty-five percent (85%) of the membership present and voting in the church business meeting shall be required to constitute a call.

- (c) *Responsibilities of Pastor.* Under the leadership of the Holy Spirit and in a spirit of servanthood, the pastor shall have oversight of and care for the general welfare of the church. He shall be a non-voting member of the body of active deacons and of all committees and church organizations. He shall be empowered to convene special meetings of the deacons, committees, and church organizations as he may deem appropriate. He shall conduct religious services, administer church ordinances, and minister to the church body and to the community. He shall serve as moderator for the church. He shall have special charge of the pulpit ministry of the church and arrange for workers to assist in revival and other special services, programs, and meetings of the church. The pastor shall serve as administrative leader of the church and as chairman of the Church Council.

In the event the church is without a pastor, or during an interim pastorate, the body of active deacons shall recommend to the church body in business meeting an interim chief administrator to oversee the administration of church affairs during the interim.

- (d) *Procedure for Termination of a Pastorate.* A pastorate may be terminated in either of the following ways:

- (1) *By Resignation of Pastor.* A pastor may resign the office by giving thirty (30) days' written notice to the church.
- (2) *By Declaration of Vacancy.* The church may declare the office of pastor vacant at a business meeting, called for that purpose, provided the provisions for calling such a meeting as set forth in these bylaws have been met. Before steps to terminate the service of a pastor are initiated, the chairperson of the deacons and at least two other deacons currently serving on the active deacon body, who shall be selected by the entire deacon body, shall meet with the pastor to discuss any causes for disagreement, in an attempt to bring about reconciliation and resolution between the pastor and the body of the church. Should reconciliation be deemed unachievable, a business meeting for the purpose of dismissal of the pastor shall be called upon by either (a) a written recommendation signed by 75% of the currently-serving deacons, or (b) a written petition signed by not less than one-fourth (1/4) of the resident

members of the church, provided the signatures have been counted and validated by the church clerk. The chairperson of the Personnel Committee shall preside at such a business meeting. A vote on the issue of declaring the office of pastor vacant shall be conducted by written, secret ballot by members present and voting at said business meeting at which the issue of dismissal of the pastor is deliberated. A vote of at least 85.0% of members present and voting in said business meeting is required for dismissal. In the event a pastor is dismissed, a recommendation concerning compensation for the dismissed pastor shall be brought to the church at the same business meeting by the Personnel Committee in conjunction with the Finance Committee.

Section 3. Interim Pastor.

- (a) *Call of Interim Pastor.* Whenever a vacancy in the pastorate occurs, the body of active deacons shall arrange for supply of the pulpit until it is deemed advisable to call an interim pastor. An interim pastor shall be called by the church in a business meeting especially called for that purpose.
- (b) *Procedure for Calling an Interim Pastor.* If the call of an interim pastor is deemed advisable, the Personnel Committee shall consider candidates for the position of interim pastor and shall recommend to the church, convened in business meeting, the most suitable candidate for the position of interim pastor and shall report to the church terms of the agreement with the candidate, including compensation, expectation of duties to be carried out, and length of service of the interim pastor. In said business meeting, an affirmative vote of at least 85.0% of the members present and voting shall constitute a call of the candidate as interim pastor and approval of terms of the agreement with the interim pastor. If a person elected as interim pastor is unable to lead all of the regular services of the church, it shall be the responsibility of the body of active deacons to recommend a suitable person to lead those services which the interim pastor is unable to lead during the term of the interim pastorate. Upon the expiration of the term of an interim pastor, the body of active deacons shall arrange for supply of the pulpit until the arrival of the new pastor.

Section 4. Church Staff. The church staff shall be made up of ministerial staff and non-ministerial staff. The pastor and the Personnel Committee of the church shall study the need for church staff positions, both ministerial and non-ministerial, shall prepare job descriptions for staff members, and shall recommend the creation, deletion, and/or filling of positions to the church. The Personnel Committee and the pastor shall conduct an annual review of salaries and benefits for all church employees and make recommendations for salaries and benefits to the Finance Committee.

- (a) *Ministerial Staff.* The ministerial staff, under the supervision of the pastor, shall serve for indefinite terms and shall share leadership, teaching, visitation, and other ministries with the pastor. They shall have general oversight duties in such program areas as their gifts allow.
  - (1) *Procedure for Calling a Member of the Ministerial Staff.* The Committee on Committees shall nominate to the church, convened in business meeting, a Staff Search Committee of not more than seven (7) resident members of the church.

Should any person nominated not be elected, the Committee on Committees shall submit another nomination until the Staff Search Committee shall be elected.

The chairperson of the Committee on Committees shall convene the initial meeting of the Staff Search Committee and serve as temporary chairperson until the Staff Search Committee elects its own officers.

The Staff Search Committee and the pastor shall solicit and review resumes, interview the candidate(s), and agree on their choice of candidate. With the concurrence of the pastor, the Personnel Committee, and the Finance Committee, the Staff Search Committee shall bring to the church, convened in business meeting, a recommendation concerning compensation for the staff member.

Upon agreement by the pastor and the Staff Search Committee on the choice of a candidate, that candidate shall be invited to the church for a weekend, during which the candidate shall attend a fellowship to which the church membership is invited to meet the candidate.

In accordance with the stipulations of these bylaws, the church shall then meet in business meeting, and a written, secret ballot vote shall be taken on whether or not to call the candidate. An affirmative vote of at least 85.0% of the membership present and voting during the business meeting is required to constitute a call.

(2) *Procedure for Termination of Service of a Member of the Ministerial Staff.* The service of a member of the ministerial staff may be terminated either by resignation of the staff member or by dismissal action taken by the church.

(A) *Resignation.* A ministerial staff member may submit a written resignation to the church, after first submitting a copy to the pastor, giving thirty (30) days' written notice of intent to terminate service.

(B) *Dismissal.* The church may dismiss a member of the ministerial staff in a church business meeting called in accordance with these bylaws. Before steps to dismiss a member of the ministerial staff can be initiated, the pastor, the chairman of the deacons, and at least two other active deacons, who shall be selected by the entire deacon body, shall meet with the ministerial staff member to discuss any causes of disagreement, in an attempt to bring about reconciliation and resolution between the ministerial staff member and the body of the church. Should reconciliation be deemed unachievable, steps to initiate the dismissal of the ministerial staff member may be taken in one of the following ways: (1) a recommendation from the pastor and the Personnel Committee may be brought to the church in a business meeting, OR (2) two-thirds of the active deacons may bring a recommendation to the church, OR (3) not less than one-fourth (1/4) of the resident members of the church may sign a written petition to initiate such action, presenting the petition to the church clerk for counting and validation of the signatures. A vote on whether to dismiss the ministerial staff member shall take place in a church business meeting by written, secret ballot. An affirmative vote of at least 85.0% of the membership present and voting in the business meeting shall be required for dismissal.

(b) *Non-Ministerial Staff.* When a vacancy occurs in a non-ministerial staff position (including, but not limited to, clerical staff, groundskeeper, custodian, organist, pianist, sound technician, nursery worker), the Personnel Committee shall search for candidates

and recommend, with concurrence of the pastor, a person for election by the church in business meeting. The service of non-ministerial staff members may be terminated (a) by resignation of the staff member with fifteen (15) days' written notice or (b) by the Personnel Committee, in concurrence with the pastor and the body of active deacons.

Section 5. Deacons. The Scriptural basis, qualifications, and instruction for the church deacons is in accordance with the teachings found in Acts 6:1-7, I Timothy 3:8-13, and Romans 16. Deacons are expected to set a consistent example, both within and without the church body, in terms of faithfulness, stewardship, ministry, witnessing, and fulfillment of their covenant obligations. The role of the deacon is that of servant, as recognized in the root meaning of the Greek word *diakonos* (servant).

(a) *Number of Deacons.* The active deacon body of the \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church shall consist of one active deacon for each fifteen resident family units, or part thereof, in the church resident membership, with a minimum of fifteen (15) deacons. Using that formula, each year in early June, the clerk, the pastor, and the chairman of deacons shall examine the church membership rolls and shall determine how many deacons should constitute the body of active deacons for the following year.

(b) *Term of Service.* The term of service for an active deacon shall be three (3) years, after which the deacon must serve one year in reserve before being eligible for re-election as an active deacon. Active deacons shall be elected on a rotating basis, with a sufficient number being elected each year to fill vacancies and new positions on the body of active deacons. Vacancies and new positions in the body of active deacons shall be filled at the time of annual deacon election.

(c) *Nomination of Candidates.* The church shall have a Deacon Nomination Committee, comprised of the chairman of deacons (who shall serve as chairman of the Deacon Nomination Committee), the pastor, the church clerk, and two members-at-large elected annually by the church. Each year the Committee on Nominations shall recommend to the church in business meeting the names of two members to serve on the Deacon Nomination Committee. In June of each year, the Deacon Nomination Committee shall begin the process of determining the nominees whose names shall be placed on the deacon election ballot by giving opportunity to any member of the church to submit in writing the names of candidates for the office of deacon.

The Deacon Nomination Committee shall consider the suggested candidates' qualifications according to the precepts of New Testament scripture. Candidates suggested must be male, must be at least twenty-five (25) years of age, must have been a member of \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church for at least two (2) years, must be regular in attendance and in support of the services, programs, and ministries of the church; must be faithful in the practice of financial stewardship; must meet the principles and conditions set forth in Acts 6:3-6, I Timothy 3:8-13, and Romans 16; and must be of good report among church members. Members of the ministerial staff, employees of the church, and ordained ministers actively serving in their calling are not eligible for election as deacons. Any such person serving as active deacons at the time of adoption of these bylaws shall be exempt from this requirement currently and in the future.

The Deacon Nomination Committee shall interview each suggested candidate to make certain that the candidate feels a call from God to the office of deacon and is qualified to serve in the office of deacon, that the candidate is aware of the duties and responsibilities

of serving in the office of deacon, and that the candidate is willing to accept and carry out those responsibilities. The Deacon Nomination Committee shall carefully consider all of the candidates and prepare the deacon election ballot containing the names of candidates deemed eligible for service on the active deacon body.

- (d) *Election.* The deacon election shall be held in a church business meeting on or before the fourth Sunday in July each year. Voting shall be by written, secret ballot. Each church member present in the business meeting shall have the right to vote for only the number of persons needed to fill available positions on the active deacon body.

The Deacon Nomination Committee shall count the ballots immediately after the business meeting is concluded and certify the results at that time. The available positions shall be filled by the candidates receiving the largest numbers of votes. If a non-ordained candidate is among the number elected, the pastor and chairman of deacons shall proceed with plans for a service of ordination for that person.

The body of active deacons, as constituted above, shall serve from September 1 through August 31 of each year. The body of active deacons shall select a chairman, a vice chairman, a secretary, and any other officers it may deem advisable from among its membership and shall hold monthly meetings at a time the deacons shall determine.

- (e) *Duties.* The following duties of deacons shall be considered primary:

- 1) They shall be responsible for guarding the unity of the spirit within the church in the bonds of peace.
- 2) They shall serve as a council for advice to and consultation with the pastor in all matters pertaining to the work of the church and shall cooperate with him in the general oversight of the moral, spiritual, and temporal welfare of the church.
- 3) They shall cooperate with the pastor in the care of the membership. They shall seek to know the physical, moral, and spiritual needs of members and shall serve in ministering to those in need.
- 4) Additional responsibilities of deacons are set forth in the Church Policies and Procedures Manual.

- (f) *Records.* The deacons shall keep written minutes of their meetings, copies of which shall be filed in the church office and preserved as official church records.

- (g) *Life Deacons.*

- 1) *Qualifications.* A nominee for life deacon must be especially admired and deeply respected by the church membership because of Christian character and integrity and must have proven by dedication and loyal, unselfish service to the church that the position of life deacon – the highest honor the church can give on of its deacons – is merited. A nominee for life deacon must have served in the capacity of active deacon in a Baptist church for at least twenty years, at least ten of which must have been served in \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church, and must have attained at least 65 years of age.
- 2) *Election.* The Deacon Nomination Committee shall propose to the church in business meeting any nominees for the position of life deacons. Any candidate so proposed who receives a majority vote of members present and voting shall be named a life deacon.
- 3) *Responsibilities.* Life deacons may attend any or all meetings of the deacon body, may accept assignments to deacon committees, or may participate in serving the Lord's Supper, but they are not required to perform any of these functions. Life



deacons may accept or decline any or all responsibilities and duties normally assigned to active deacons. Life deacons shall not vote in meetings of the body of deacons; however, they shall have the privilege of participating in discussion and debate.

Section 6. Clerk. The duties of the clerk include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (a) Keeping appropriate records of all of the formal actions of the church.
- (b) Keeping a roll containing the names of members, with dates of admission and dates of termination of membership, as well as a record of baptisms.
- (c) Issuing any letters of exclusion from membership as voted upon by the church body, as well as any official letters dealing with termination of employment of church officers and/or staff.
- (d) Giving legal notice of all church meetings wherein such legal notice is necessary and appropriate.
- (e) Being responsible for the oversight and safekeeping of official church records. Such oversight and safekeeping may be delegated to the church office staff as is deemed prudent and appropriate.
- (f) Being responsible for various other duties as outlined in these bylaws and as requested by the church body.

Section 7. Treasurer. The treasurer shall work with the Finance Committee to ensure the following:

- (a) A budget is properly prepared and presented to the church before the beginning of each fiscal year.
- (b) Personnel handling contributions are following established procedures in the accurate accounting of individual contributions.
- (c) Funds are accurately distributed and divided as designated.
- (d) The physical safety of all deposits is ensured.
- (e) A written report is given to the congregation of the financial condition of the church at each regular business meeting.

Additionally, the treasurer shall ensure that the financial secretary is following prescribed procedures in recording and reporting all financial transactions as included in the financial secretary's job description. If a vacancy in the position of financial secretary should occur, the treasurer shall be named as a member of the Staff Search Committee to secure a replacement. The treasurer shall serve as a non-voting member of the Finance Committee. The treasurer shall be bonded and shall sign and/or co-sign checks as required.

Section 8. Trustees. The church shall have a rotating group of five trustees, one of whom shall be elected each year for a five-year term. A trustee who completes the five-year term shall not be re-elected as a trustee until at least one year has passed. Each year the Committee on Nominations shall recommend to the church body in business meeting a person to fill the trustee vacancy created by the rotation procedure. A nominee for the position of trustee must have been a member of this church for at least two years. After an opportunity for nominations from the floor, the trustee shall be elected by the church and shall join the other of our trustees already serving. The trustees of the church shall serve as officers of the church corporation. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property without a specific

vote of the church membership authorizing each action. It shall be the function of the trustees to affix their signatures to legal documents involving the sale, mortgaging, rental, or purchase of property, or any other legal documents whereupon the signatures of the trustees or corporate officers are required. These responsibilities shall involve no personal liability on the part of the trustees. The trustees shall keep written minutes of their meetings, copies of which shall be filed in the church office and preserved as official church records.

### **ARTICLE III ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH**

Section 1. *Baptism.* Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The authority to baptize rests with the local church. The pastor or any other designated baptized believer shall perform baptism on behalf of this church. Baptism shall be administered as soon as possible after the believer's public confession of faith and shall be administered at any regular worship service.

Section 2. *The Lord's Supper.* The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least quarterly. The pastor, the church staff, and the deacons shall plan and administer the Lord's Supper.

### **ARTICLE IV CHURCH MEETINGS**

Section 1. *Regular Worship Services.* The church shall hold regular worship services open to all persons for the purpose of worship, prayer, preaching, instruction, evangelism, training, and fellowship each Sunday and Wednesday. Should circumstances so dictate, the pastor or ministerial staff members or the chairman of the active deacon body may approve the cancellation or re-scheduling of services.

Section 2. *Special Worship Services.* All special worship services essential to the promotion of the purpose and objectives of the church shall be placed on the church calendar, published in the church's newsletter, at least one (1) week before the services are held, and announced at all services on the Sunday prior to the conducting of the special services.

Section 3. *Regular Business Meetings.* The church body shall meet in regular business meeting on the third Sunday evening of each month for the purpose of transacting the business of the church, accepting and dismissing members, and hearing reports from the various church programs and ministries.

Section 4. *Called Business Meetings.* A business meeting may be called for a special purpose. Notice of the subject to be considered, the date and time, and the specific location of the called business meeting must be announced from the pulpit at all Sunday services on a Sunday at least one week prior to the meeting and shall be published in the church's newsletter, during the week before the meeting is held. In a called business meeting, only the subject announced as the purpose for the meeting may be considered; no other items of business may be introduced.

Section 5. Procedures for Conduct of Business Meetings. A quorum in either a regularly-scheduled business meeting or a called business meeting shall consist of those church members who attend the business meeting. Except when otherwise specified in these bylaws or stipulated by parliamentary procedure, a simple majority (more than 50.0%) of the membership present and voting on any matter shall constitute approval of the matter. Unless otherwise stipulated in these bylaws, all secret ballots shall be counted immediately following the vote in the presence of the church body. The moderator shall appoint persons to count the ballots, and the results shall be announced immediately after the count is completed. All secret ballots shall be secured in the church office for a period of three months from the date of the vote, after which time they shall be destroyed.

Section 6. Rules of Procedure. The most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* shall be the authority in matters of parliamentary procedure governing the deliberations in all church business meetings, except when superseded by provisions of the constitution and bylaws of the church.

Section 7. Moderator. The pastor shall moderate all business meetings. In the absence of the pastor, either the associate pastor or the chairman of deacons shall serve as acting moderator. In the absence of all three of these, the church clerk shall call the church to order, and an acting moderator shall be elected.

## **ARTICLE V CHURCH PROGRAMS AND MINISTRIES**

Section 1. General Provisions. All internal groups created and empowered by the church shall be accountable to and report directly to the church body, unless otherwise specified by church action. All programs and ministries of the church shall be approved by the church and shall be subject to church coordination and general supervision. All program officers shall be elected by the church body, to whom these officers shall report on a regular basis regarding program activities and outcomes. All program leaders must be members of this church and shall serve for one-year terms. The program year for all church programs shall be from September 1<sup>st</sup> through August 31<sup>st</sup>.

The church shall plan and organize such ministries as it deems necessary. All ministries are subject to coordination and scheduling by the Church Council. All ministry leaders must be members of this church.

Section 2. Church Council. The Church Council shall meet regularly to schedule and coordinate the work of the church. The Church Council shall consist of church members holding the following positions: pastor (chairman of council), ministerial staff members, church clerk (secretary of council), Woman's Missionary Union director, Baptist Men's director, Sunday School director, chairman of deacons, and chairpersons of the following committees: Children's Ministry, Senior Adult Ministry, Student Ministry, Music/Worship, Finance, and Hostesses. From time to time, the Church Council may request other church leaders to attend the council meetings.

Section 3. Church Programs.

- (a) *Sunday School*. The Sunday School program shall be the Bible-teaching organization and evangelistic outreach of the church. It shall be organized as appropriate for all ages and shall be under the direction of the Sunday School director and other officers elected by the church, with help from appropriate advisory committees. All Sunday School leaders and teachers shall be members of the church and shall be elected by the church.
- (b) *Music*. The music program shall be organized and directed by the minister of music with help from appropriate advisory committees, to provide music education and training and musical experiences in church services.
- (c) *Youth, Children, Singles, College and Career Young Adults, and Senior Adults*. The specific programs for youth, children, singles, college and career young adults, and senior adults shall be organized and directed by the appropriate ministerial staff member with help from appropriate advisory committees.
- (d) *Woman's Missionary Union*. The Woman's Missionary Union program shall be organized and directed by the Woman's Missionary Union director, elected by the church body, with help from appropriate advisory committees.
- (e) *Baptist Men*. The Baptist Men program shall be organized and directed by the Baptist men director, elected by the church body, with help from appropriate advisory committees.

## **ARTICLE VI CHURCH COMMITTEES**

Section 1. General Provisions. The church shall establish such standing and *ad hoc* committees as it deems necessary to fulfill its stated purpose. Members of all committees shall be members of \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church. The pastor shall be a non-voting member of each committee.

Section 2. Creation of Committees. Whenever the creation of a new committee, either standing or *ad hoc*, becomes available, except in cases as otherwise designated in these bylaws [Article II, Sections 2(b) and 4(a)], the pastor shall bring to the church body in business meeting a recommendation concerning the responsibilities of the committee. If the church body votes to establish the new committee, the Committee on Committees shall nominate members of the church to make up the committee, including a recommendation for chairperson of the committee. The members of the newly-created committee shall be elected by the church in business meeting.

Section 3. Standing Committees. Standing committees shall serve on the program year (September 1 through August 31). The terms of members of all standing committees, unless otherwise designated, shall be for three years, set up on a rotation basis with one-third of the members on each committee elected annually to replace the members whose terms expire that year. Members of standing committees who have served a three-year term shall not be eligible to serve again on the same committee until one year has passed. When a new standing committee is formed, one-third of the members shall be elected for a one-year term, one-third for a two-year term, and one-third for a three-year term. The chairperson of each standing committee shall be designated annually by the Committee on Committees, preferably a person who has served at least one year on the committee. All standing committees are accountable to the church body and shall report regularly to the church in business meeting. A standing committee may be disbanded

only by vote of the church body and amendment to the bylaws in Article VI, Section 5, removing that committee from the list of the church's authorized standing committees. Each standing committee shall meet at least once each quarter and shall keep written minutes of its meetings, copies of which shall be filed in the church office and preserved as official church records.

Section 4. *Ad Hoc Committees.* An *ad hoc* committee serves until the task for which it was elected has been completed. It shall make its report to the church body, and then it shall be disbanded and have no further responsibilities.

Section 5. *Duties and Responsibilities.* The duties and responsibilities of all church committees shall be set forth in detail in a Church Policies and Procedures Manual (see Article VIII).

Section 6. *Authorized Standing Committees.* The following standing committees are authorized by the church:

COMMITTEES CONCERNING ADMINISTRATION OF ORDINANCES

1. Baptism Committee
2. Lord's Supper Committee (the active deacons)

COMMITTEES CONCERNING MISSION PROGRAMS

1. Missions Committee (includes a member representing each of the following ministries: Children's Home and Family Ministries, Community Missions, International Student Ministries, Cemetery Upkeep, Public Relations, Red Cross Relief Work, and Local Benevolence)
2. Vacation Bible School Committee

COMMITTEES CONCERNING CHURCH PROGRAMS

1. Children's Ministry Committee
2. Parent's Advisory Committee
3. Senior Adult Ministry Committee
4. Student Ministry Committee
5. Worship/Music Committee
6. Ushers Committee
7. Library Committee

COMMITTEES CONCERNING RECORDS AND BUSINESS OPERATION

1. Building and Property Committee
2. Committee on Nominations
3. Constitution and Bylaws Committee
4. Finance Committee
5. Membership Committee
6. Personnel Committee
7. Committee on Committees
8. Risk Management Committee
9. Transportation Committee
10. Deacon Nomination Committee

COMMITTEES CONCERNING OUTREACH AND HOSPITALITY

1. Community/Public Relations Committee
2. Committee on Service to Bereaved Families
3. Outreach/Visitation Committee
4. Homecoming Committee
5. Hostess Committee

**ARTICLE VII  
CHURCH FINANCES**

Section 1. *Accountability.* All tithes, offerings, and other income of the church shall be managed and dispersed by basic Biblical stewardship practices. It is solely the right and responsibility of the church body to establish all designated funds for the benefit of any part of the church's operation, and the church will accept no monies designated for specific funds unless the funds have been established by the church body in business meeting. Each member of the church is encouraged to tithe prayerfully, joyfully, and systematically through the unified church budget account. In addition, each member is encouraged to give offerings above the tithe through the several mission offerings and other funds of the church.

Section 2. *Fiscal Year.* The church's fiscal year shall run concurrently with the calendar year – from January 1 through December 31.

Section 3. *Church Planning and Budgeting.* The Finance Committee shall be responsible for the general supervision of the administration of the financial resources of the church. The Finance Committee shall work in cooperation with the church staff, program directors, and church committees to prepare and submit annual budget requests to the church. This budget shall be approved by the church in business meeting no later than December 1 of each year. The Finance Committee shall meet at least one time each quarter during the year to monitor cash flow, to ensure accountability and oversight of the financial situation of the church, and to make any needed recommendations to the church in business meeting. The church's treasurer and financial secretary shall be non-voting members of the Finance Committee.

Section 4. *Procedures, Responsibilities, and Reporting.* All monies of the church shall be deposited to, transferred within, or withdrawn from the established accounts governed by the policies of the church. The Finance Committee shall be responsible for the stewardship of these accounts in accordance with church policies. A printed statement of the beginning balance, revenues, expenditures, and the closing balance for each account shall be presented by the chairman of the Finance Committee at each regular business meeting.

Section 5. *Signatures on Checks.* All checks issued by the church from any account shall bear the signatures of two of the following: the financial secretary, the church treasurer, the chairman of the Finance Committee, and the chairman of deacons.

Section 6. *Requests for Funds.* Any request for the expenditure of funds not previously approved in the budget shall be made to the Finance Committee. If the Finance Committee approves the

request, the Finance Committee shall present the request to the church body in business meeting. In the event of an immediate need of any emergency nature, the Finance Committee shall be authorized to approve the expenditure and report it to the church in the next business meeting.

## **ARTICLE VIII CHURCH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

Section 1. General Provisions. Recognizing the need for the consistent and uniform application of policies and procedures in the on-going functioning of the church, the church shall provide for the orderly preparation and maintenance of a Church Policies and Procedures Manual. The manual shall include, but not be limited to, personnel policies; financial policies; job descriptions for all church staff positions, deacons, church officers, and committees in the church; organizational charts to show lines of responsibility and accountability in the administration of the church; church use and facility policies; motor vehicle policies; and nursery policies. Documentation shall be based on church action of record and/or precedent when no church action has occurred or is required. The manual shall be maintained in the church office under the direction of the pastor. It shall be made available for use by any individual member or group of members as the need arises. Any church member or organization may suggest changes to any policies of the church; however, additions, revision, or deletions to church policies shall be made only by church approval in a business meeting.

## **ARTICLE IX ADOPTION**

Section 1. General Provisions. These bylaws shall be considered adopted and in immediate effect if and when two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and voting at the business meeting at which the vote is taken to adopt the bylaws shall vote in favor of adoption. This vote shall be taken not less than fourteen (14) days and not more than thirty (30) days after formal presentation of these bylaws to the church. Once adopted, these bylaws shall abolish, supersede, and replace all bylaws which preceded them.

Section 2. Maintenance of Bylaws. A copy of these bylaws shall be kept in the church office. All amendments and revisions to these bylaws, after passage by church vote, shall be prepared by the church clerk and incorporated into the bylaws of the church. The bylaws, and all amendments and revisions thereof, shall be made available to church members upon request.

## **ARTICLE X AMENDMENTS**

Section 1. Procedure for Amendment. Amendments to these bylaws shall be made by the following procedure:

- (a) Any member of the church shall have the right to submit in writing a request for an amendment to these bylaws during a church business meeting. The request for amendment shall be referred automatically to the Constitution and Bylaws Committee

- for study. The Constitution and Bylaws Committee shall bring its report concerning the request for amendment to the next regularly-scheduled business meeting.
- (b) If the Constitution and Bylaws Committee recommends the amendment, the committee shall present the proposed amendment to the church body in writing during a business meeting.
  - (c) The text of the proposed amendment shall be published at least twice in the church's newsletter prior to being voted upon.
  - (d) Copies of the text of the proposed amendment shall be made available to all church members attending the business meeting at which the amendment is voted upon.
  - (e) A vote on adopting the amendment shall be taken in a business meeting not less than fourteen (14) days or more than thirty (30) days after the formal presentation of the amendment to the church by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee.

Section 2. Adoption. An amendment shall be adopted and take immediate effect when a majority (more than 50.0%) of all members present and voting in the business meeting in which the amendment is voted upon shall vote in favor of adoption.

**BYLAWS ADOPTED IN CALLED BUSINESS MEETING ON MARCH 25, 2001.**