

# Bylaws

## for First Baptist Church of Cowpens, South Carolina

A South Carolina Baptist Nonprofit Religious Corporation

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## Revision History

| VERSION  | Description  | Date  |
|--|--|---|
| <b>1.0</b><br><b>Bylaws</b><br><b>&amp;</b><br><b>Appendix ONE:</b><br><b>Statement of Faith</b> | Initial Version<br><i>Bylaws team reviewed and made recommendations to template provided by the South Carolina Baptist Convention.</i><br>Bylaws Team:<br><i>Jennie Fowler</i><br><i>Lane Green</i><br><i>Hazel Swofford</i> | Sept - Nov 2022   |
|  | Legal Recommendations<br><i>Charles Hedman, JD</i><br><i>Brotherhood Mutual</i>  | 12/1/2022   |
|  | DRAFT released to church members   | 12/11/2022  |
| <b>1.1 Adopted</b><br><i>With minor revisions from congregation review</i>                       | Unanimous vote   | 12/28/2022  |
| <b>1.2 Revised Copy</b><br><i>With amendments from the congregational review</i>                 | Revisions to the following:<br><i>Article 6 Section 3, Article 7 Section 2, Article 13 Section 1, and Article 8 Section 2 for Finance &amp; Building/Grounds Committees, Article 4 Sections 1 &amp; 3</i>                    | 12/17/2024<br><i>From business meetings on 7/26/2023 &amp; 1/28/2024 as well as meeting for clarifications with Jennie Fowler</i> |
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## The Preamble to the Church Bylaws

**Mission:** Doing life together as we Encounter, Connect, Grow, Serve, Pray and Magnify God!

**Core Values:** Biblical Integrity; Christ-Centered Living; Healthy Relationships; Meaningful Worship; Priority of Prayer; Kingdom Impact

We, the membership of First Baptist Church Cowpens, South Carolina, declare and establish these bylaws to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and govern the body in an orderly manner. This church is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

The purpose of this church shall be to propagate among all people the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to provide opportunities for worship, training, spiritual growth, and service. This church recognizes the Bible is God's word to His people and is inerrant.

See also **APPENDIX ONE** – Statement of Faith

## Article One: Principal Office

Organized: 08/13/1878

Constituted: 08/13/1878

Articles of Incorporation dated: 02/19/1976

Named: FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF COWPENS, SC

Physical Address: 108 West Church Street, Cowpens, SC 29330

Phone: (864) 463-4080

Mailing Address: PO Box 1818 Cowpens, SC 29330

Web Site: <https://www.firstbaptistcowpens.com>

General Email Address: donna@firstbaptistcowpens.com

## Article Two: Membership

### Section 1 – General Information

The New Testament presents a picture of definable groups of people who, once committed to the Lord, identified themselves with and committed themselves to a particular local body (Acts 2:42-46; Romans 16:1; I Corinthians 1:2; II Corinthians 8:1; Philippians 1:1; Acts 11:26). Membership is open to people who have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, have been baptized by immersion, and are united together by covenant as one body in Christ. This body is a sovereign and democratic Baptist Church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains the right to exclusive self-government in all phases of this church's spiritual and temporal life.

### Section 2 – Candidacy

Any person may present themselves to the church, at any regular church service, as a candidate for membership in any of the following ways:

- a) By profession of faith and for baptism by immersion as demonstrated by Jesus in Scripture
- b) By promise of a letter of recommendation from another Baptist Church
- c) By statement of belief of prior conversion and membership in a Baptist Church

As a best practice, new members will complete the New Member's Class before participating in church business conferences.

### Section 3 – Active and Inactive Designation

To properly reflect the church's membership, church rolls will be maintained by the church; to be updated periodically and reported to the congregation.

a) **Active members:** All members who are currently involved in the church's activities, functions, and worship services, demonstrating their active status by participating a minimum of 12 times in a 12-month period and giving to the church.

b) **Inactive members:** Members who have become inactive due to moving from the Church's ministry area and not having joined another church, or members who have been inactive for twelve (12) months. Inactive members may be reinstated by personal request at a regular church service and resume their attendance. Voting privileges are suspended for those on the Inactive roll.

### Section 4 – Responsibilities

The responsibilities of membership are as follows:

1. Protect the unity of the church by acting in love toward other members, by refusing to gossip, and by following the leaders (Rom. 15:5,19; I Peter 1:22; Eph. 4:29; Heb. 13:17).
2. Share the responsibility of the church by praying for its growth, inviting the unchurched to attend, and warmly welcoming those who attend (I Thes. 1:2; Luke 4:23; Romans 15:7).
3. Serve the ministry of the church by discovering individual gifts and talents, being equipped to serve by pastors, and by developing a servant's heart (I Pet. 4:10; Eph. 4:11-12; Phil. 2:3-4,7).
4. Support the church's testimony by attending faithfully, living a godly life, and regularly giving (Heb. 10:24, 25; Phil. 1:27; 1 Cor. 16:2).

### Section 5 – Voting Rights

Every active member, 18 years or older, is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in regular conference. These voting matters include the annual church budget, leadership election, and other general business concerns. There shall be no provisions for absentee or proxy ballots. We plan to require a two-thirds majority vote.

These motions are:

1. Personnel – Labor law
2. Contract Law
3. Banking Issues – Loans
4. Purchase of large item or property
5. Amendments to the Bylaws

### Section 6 – Membership Transfer and Termination

Membership shall be terminated for the following reasons:

1. Death
2. Transfer of membership to another Baptist Church
3. Proof of membership in a church of another denomination
4. Personal written request of the member
5. Exclusion by church vote (See Section 7 directly below)

### Section 7 – Discipline

It shall be the practice of this church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The pastor, deacons, and church staff are available for counsel and guidance. The attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption rather than punishment.

Should a member commit a serious offense that the church considers to be detrimental to the church's general welfare and reputation, the Pastor and Deacons will take every reasonable measure to encourage the offender to repent and be reconciled to God and the Church in accordance with Scripture

(1 Cor. 5:6; 1 Tim. 5:20-21; Matt. 18:15-18). If the exclusion of the member best serves the church's welfare, the church may dismiss the member by a two-thirds vote in a specially called conference led by the Pastor.

## Section 8 – Discipline Restoration

Any person whose membership was terminated because of discipline may request restoration of membership through an appeal to the Senior Pastor and the Deacon chair. Upon recommendation from the Deacon Body to the church body, membership may be restored. A recommendation for restoration from the Deacon Body will be brought to the church during a business meeting whereby a two-thirds vote to accept the restoration request can be recorded.

# Article Three: Meetings

## Section 1 – Worship

The church shall hold regular meetings for worship, teaching, training, outreach, and fellowship at the principal Church location, unless otherwise designated from time to time by the Pastor/Staff.

## Section 2 – Ordinances

**Baptism:** A candidate for baptism is one who

- Receives Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith
- Professes Him publicly at any worship service
- Indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord

Baptism shall be by immersion in water and administered by the pastor or the pastor's designee.

Baptism is an act of worship and may occur during any worship service. (Mark 1:9-11). A person confessing Christ and not being baptized after a reasonable time will receive counseling by the pastor, staff, or deacons. Resisting counsel to pursue baptism results in removal from the baptismal candidate list.

**Lord's Supper:** The Lord's Supper is a symbol of obedience where members of the church body, through the partaking of the bread and fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His second coming. (Matthew 26:26-29) The Pastor and Deacons (or designated team) bear responsibility for preparing and administering the Lord's Supper. The observance of the Lord's Supper typically takes place on months with a fifth Sunday and at other seasonal times proposed by the pastor.

## Section 3 – Business Conferences

Quarterly Business Conferences are to be announced by date and notice given for the meeting to the congregation. All months of the quarter's financial and general business activity need to be addressed.

*Sample Regular agenda:* Call to order, acceptance of the agenda as printed, reading of minutes, clerk's report, treasurer report, Leadership Council report, committee reports, old/former business, new business, adjourn.

## Section 4 – Special Meetings

The Pastor, Chairman of the Deacons, or Leadership Council may call a Special Called business meeting at any time, for any purpose, by giving notice to the members according to Section 5 of this Article.

Motions/actions related to personnel, contracts, large purchases (real estate), banking and mortgage, and amending of bylaws or articles of incorporation need to be secret ballot votes by members. Special called business requires 2/3 majority votes of members present and voting.

## Section 5 – Notices

Notification of membership meetings will occur using any of the following reasonable methods of calling a membership meeting:



- a) Distribution of material to the congregation in attendance at a weekend service
- b) Announcement of the meeting in a church program, bulletin, newsletter
- c) Oral announcement to the congregation at a weekend service
- d) Delivery by United States mail to each church member
- e) Church website, social media and available forms of electronic communication
- f) All notices are at least one week in advance of the discussion /vote

### Section 6 – Quorum

A quorum shall consist of those members present and voting at a meeting duly noticed and called for the transaction of business.

### Section 7 – Voting

At regular business meetings, voting only requires a simple majority of those members present and voting. A special called business meeting requires a 2/3 majority vote of those members present and voting. Any vote requiring a 2/3 majority vote requires the use of secret ballots. There shall be no provisions for absentee or proxy ballots.

### Section 8 – Electronic Voting

In the event a need for electronic voting does arise, the Leadership Council in Conjunction with the Pastor can elect to recommend for a tool that would allow for appropriate e-voting. Notices will follow the same spirit within this section of Article Three.

### Section 9 – Rules of Order

The rules contained in the most recent edition of Robert’s Rules of Order shall guide the church in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the articles, these bylaws, state law, biblical teaching, or any special rules of order the church may adopt.

### Section 10 – Emergency Bylaws Action

In anticipation of or during an emergency defined in this section, the Leadership Council or Deacon Body may: (1) modify lines of succession to accommodate the incapacity of any director, officer, employee, or agent; and (2) relocate the principal office or designate alternative principal offices. The purpose of this section is to continue operations of this church. The Leadership Council and / or Deacon Body may be deemed to be directors for the meeting. Church action taken in good faith during an emergency under this section to further the ordinary affairs of the church: (1) binds the church; and (2) may not be used to impose liability on a director, officer, employee, or agent. If a quorum of the Leadership Council or Deacon Body cannot readily be assembled because of some catastrophic event. Church action taken in good faith under this section to further the affairs of the church during an emergency binds the church. A director, officer, employee, or agent is not liable for deviation from normal procedures if the conduct was authorized by emergency powers provided in this article. After emergency action is declared, the ending timeline must be published in order to move out of an emergency state.

## Article Four: Leadership Council

### Section 1 – Responsibilities

The Leadership Council functions to clear relevant business decisions before church presentation and vote. The Leadership Council assists the Pastor in (changed from oversees) all legal and financial matters and provides for the care and maintenance of all properties owned by the Church. The Leadership council will act as the board of directors in compliance with the non-profit corporation act. The pastor is the overseer of the Leadership Council.

## Section 2 – Qualifications

1 Timothy 3:1-8 provides the qualifications for service on the Leadership Council. Volunteer representatives on the Team are to be men and women of integrity, open-minded, visionary Christians with a heart for Kingdom work and upholding the vision goal and objectives of the Church. Additionally, will be a member of the church for more than one year prior to consideration.

## Section 3 – Duties

Assist (changed from oversee) the Church in the areas of church administration, ministry, mission, calendar services, financial concerns, and facility use, along with all full-time and parttime personnel issues, volunteer service and other duties as set forth by the Pastor.

## Section 4 – Election and Service

The Leadership Council may be made up of the head of each area of the six purposes of the church (Evangelism, Discipleship, Worship, Prayer, Ministry and Fellowship) along with the Pastor and two staff members (or officer) appointed by the Pastor. Additionally, the Leadership Council may have up to three members as deemed appropriate (*rotating terms recommended for the three additional members*). Length of service on the Leadership Council will typically follow a three-year term.

## Section 5 – Vacancies

All volunteer vacancies to the Leadership Council shall be appointed in conjunction with the Pastor, and the two staff members appointed by the Pastor.

## Section 6 – Meetings and Quorum

The Leadership Council will meet quarterly, typically two weeks before the business conference. This calendared time will allow the presentation of future events, calendar dates, and financial arrangements discussed and proposed for church vote on upcoming issues. The Quorum consists of a simple majority (50% + 1) of the Team present and voting. No proxy votes may be allowed. (Article II, Section-8)

# Article Five: Professional Ministerial and Support Staff

## Section 1 – Staff Overview

- Pastor
- Worship Leader
- Minister of Youth
- Business Administrator
- Ministry Support Staff

## Section 2 – Pastor

A Pastor shall be called by the church and will serve until the relationship is dissolved at the request of either the Pastor or the church. In either case, at least a thirty-day notice shall be given of resignation/termination of the relationship, unless otherwise mutually agreed, with both Pastor and the church seeking to follow the will of God and the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

Request for a Pastor to resign/step down may be a consultation face to face, or a mediation. The request may come in the form of a letter with signatures from the Personnel Committee. An exit agreement may be formulated to (assign) the office vacancy, financials cleared, and keys and computers returned. A four-fifths (80%) vote to terminate is required.

### Section 3 – Pastor Function

The Pastor is considered a full-time employee of the church and is the administrative leader to all church staff and employees of the church. He may call a special meeting of the deacons, committees, teams, or groups. The Pastor may call the church into business conference with proper notice. The Pastor shall be the spiritual leader of the church and plan and conduct all worship services of the church or arrange for a substitute when he is absent. He shall minister to the spiritual needs of the total membership. He shall lead the congregation and the deacons in programs of visitation and stewardship. He shall lead in the observance of the ordinances. (Acts 14:23, 20:28-32; I Timothy 5:17; Titus 1:5-9; I Peter 5:1-4)

#### **Pastor**

The Pastor is responsible for leading the church body in functioning as a New Testament Church (Acts 14:23, 20:28-32; 1 Tim. 5:17; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Pet. 5:1-4). The Pastor is responsible for providing spiritual instruction and strategic leadership to the members, staff, and ministries of the church.

#### **Worship Leader**

The Worship Leader is responsible for leading in the planning, coordination, operation, and evaluation of a comprehensive music ministry.

#### **Minister of Youth**

The Minister of Youth is responsible for leading in the planning, administering, coordinating, supervising, and evaluating a comprehensive and active youth and / or children's ministry.

**Business Administrator & Trustees** – Shall at the direction and discretion of the church, have access to legal title to church property, sign all contracts/documents as approved by the church, and keep the official copies of the church Incorporation, Bylaws, and Policies and Procedures documents.

### Section 4 – Pastor Selection Process

A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. A Pastor Search Committee shall be elected by the church upon nomination by the Nominating Committee. The Pastor Search Committee shall be representative of the congregation by gender, age, and length of membership in the church. The Personnel Committee may give direction to the Search Committee as they interview candidates. The Pastor Search Committee shall bring the name of only one prospective pastor at a time for consideration by the church, and no nomination shall be made except by the committee. It is anticipated the congregation will have the opportunity to engage with the candidate prior to election (ie: church social, church lunch etc...). Election shall be by secret ballot given to all membership over 18 years of age. An affirmative vote of four fifths (80%) or higher is a favorable vote to call the candidate. It is expected the Chairman of the Search Committee and designee would count the secret ballots. If a favorable vote is not reached, the Search Committee shall be instructed to seek out another minister candidate and the meeting shall be adjourned without debate.

### Section 5 – Interim Pastor Selection

In the event an Interim Pastor is needed, the Leadership Council will select the individuals to serve, define the duties, and coordinate the financial arrangements with Personnel and Finance Committees.

### Section 6 – Other Administrator / Ministerial Staff

Ministerial Staff may be called to administer the Mission/Vision/Strategy of the church as needed. The Pastor and Personnel Committee will make recommendations for leadership in any of the following: Music, Education, Age Group Specialists, Administration, Missions, and other potential ministry areas.

### Section 7 - Hiring Support Staff

Support staff may be recommended by appropriate supervisors, with approval and hiring by the Personnel Committee, following the screening and interviewing process. Compensation shall be specified

by the Personnel Committee, in conjunction with the Finance Committee, subject to approval of the church.

## Section 8 - Support Staff General Duties

Refer to Policy and Procedures Manual.

## Section 9 – Staff Termination

Termination procedures for all staff are addressed in the Policy and Procedures manual. The Personnel Committee and non-staff Leadership Council members may be briefed on the situations related to terminations when they happen and when consideration for proper labor law actions is required.

## Section 10 – Staff Screening

All candidates for ministry, administrative or support staff positions are required to submit to screening procedures including but not limited to credit checks, address verifications, and criminal and academic background checks. Any information obtained during the screening process shall be considered highly confidential and shall be kept in a sealed file and stored in a locked cabinet indefinitely with access limited to the officers or staff authorized by the Leadership Council and indicated on the exterior of the file.

# Article Six: Deacons

## Section 1 – Deacon Qualifications

1. Meet spiritual qualifications of I Timothy 3:8-13. (Man of one wife defined as monogamous)
2. An active church member and resident, age 30 and older.
3. A Christian and member of the church for more than one year.
4. Have demonstrated engagement and service within a ministry of the church.
5. Tither – regularly contributing financially to support the financial ministry of the church. (To be validated by the financial secretary)
6. Be willing to participate in deacon ministry service groups and activities. (Acts 6:2-3; I Timothy 3:11; Peter 2:25)

## Section 2 – Number of Deacons

There shall always be a minimum of 5 deacons. The number of Deacons needed shall be reviewed annually by the Leadership Council with recommendations to increase/decrease as needed to support church functions and ministries.

## Section 3 – Deacon Nominations and Voting

By September of each year the nominating committee will generate a list of potential Deacon candidates from eligible male members. The potential candidates meeting the qualifications will be contacted by current Deacons or the Pastor with assistance from the nominating committee as needed, to explain Deacon duties and responsibilities and confirm willingness to serve. Based on responses from potential candidates a list of final nominees shall be generated and presented to the church membership at least two weeks before a Deacon election is held.

Deacon election will be conducted by written ballot during a quarterly business meeting, or special called meeting in October. The names receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected to fill required open positions. New Deacons assume office at the beginning of the Church calendar year on January 1.

Absentee voting will be allowed for election of deacons by eligible church members who are unable to be present to vote because of health or other legitimate reasons.

## Section 4 – Ordaining Deacons

An ordination service shall be held prior to assuming office for the purpose of ordaining any un-ordained person who is elected to serve as a deacon. The Pastor shall assemble an ordination council to perform the ceremony of ordination in the presence of the church.

## Section 5 – Deacon Service

Each Deacon elected shall serve a full three-years unless fulfilling an unexpired term. Deacons should not be eligible for re-election until the lapse of at least one year unless the deacon is serving an unexpired term of less than 18 months. Re-election exceptions may occur for special situations but must be approved by the Leadership Council (examples: insufficient qualified candidates, emergency situations, etc.). Vacancies within 6 months of new deacon elections will not be filled.

## Section 6 – Deacons Meetings and Subgroups

The Deacons shall meet monthly, preferably the same time each month. These meeting times shall be on the general church calendar. Special meetings may be called by the Senior Pastor or Chairman of the Deacons as needs dictate. The Deacons shall elect their own leadership within the active Deacon group. (1 Timothy 3:1-7) Sub-groups and care team assistants may be formed or named by Deacons to effectively carry out service and ministry duties to the congregation. The Deacons are accountable to the church body as specified in the Bible and as directed by the Holy Spirit.

## Section 7 – Deacon Resignation

Any Deacon may resign by written notification to the Pastor and Leadership Council. The removal from office of any Deacon may occur for 1) physical incapacitation, 2) spiritual or moral issues, 3) doctrinal issues, and 4) failure to fulfill responsibilities of the office. Matthew 18 serves as the basis to implement dismissal by the Pastor and the Deacon body for steps 1–3.

## Section 8 – Screening

Deacons will have background screening as outlined in Article 7 – Section 7.

# Article Seven: Other Church Leaders

## Section 1 – Other Church Leaders

The leadership structure of Church is based upon the nature of the church as revealed in Scripture and the necessary legal requirements for a recognized religious organization. The intentional design of the church's leadership structure accommodates simplicity, growth, unity, and biblical teaching.

The primary offices of this church shall be Pastor, Deacons, Moderator, Clerk, and Treasurer, whose election, tenure, and duties shall be as provided for in the Bylaws and considered corporate officers of the church. All officers of the church shall be members of the church.

## Section 2 – Officers' Functions

**Moderator** – Shall preside at all Church business meetings consistent with the guidelines for a presiding officer in the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

**Clerk** – Is responsible for recording minutes of business meetings, preserving historical records, correspondence to membership, and preparing annual information for the association, state convention, and Southern Baptist Convention.

**Treasurer** – Shall oversee, deposit, and payout, according to financial policies, all monies, and other funds of the Church, always keeping an itemized report of receipts and disbursements.

**Other Major Leadership Positions** – The Church shall have such other officers, ministry leaders, or task force leaders as the Holy Spirit may direct to carry out the purposes of the church.

## Section 3 – Vacancies

Vacancies may be filled at any time of the year. Unexpired terms may be filled by the Nominating Committee. An unexpired term should not disqualify a member for re-enlistment or re-election through the Nominating Committee process. Typically, the Leadership Council shall approve the Nominating Committee recommendation to fill the vacancies mid-year/prior to Annual Business Conference.

## Section 4 – Enlistment, Election, and Rotation

### **Moderator/Clerk**

Each may serve up to five consecutive annual terms before being off for at least one year.

**Treasurer** shall serve on a rotation basis. After serving a maximum term of three consecutive years and be off at least one year prior to eligibly serve as treasurer again.

**Other Major Leadership** - The duties, method of selection or election, and terms of office of such officers shall be according to the church's instructions unless otherwise provided herein.

## Section 5 – Officer/Leadership Qualifications

Officers/Leadership shall be members of the Church. Characteristics defined in Scripture serve as the basis for officer/leadership qualifications (John 12:26; 1 Cor. 11:1; Luke 22:22; 1 Peter 5:2-5).

## Section 6 – Resignations

Other Leaders shall serve a one-year/three-year/five-year rotation commitment specific to the position, qualifications, and duties. During an annual review, re-enlistment/re-election, both the individual and Pastor/Staff, may evaluate the continuance of service, considering the Biblical qualification and any personal factors that might affect service. Any Officer, Deacon, or Leader may resign by written notification to the Leadership Council. The removal from office of any Leader may occur for

- 1) physical incapacitation,
- 2) spiritual or moral issues,
- 3) doctrinal issues, and
- 4) failure to fulfill responsibilities of the office. Matthew 18 serves as the basis to implement dismissal by the Leadership Council and the Deacon body for steps 1–3.

## Section 7 – Screening - Leaders and Workers

All Deacons, Leaders, and Workers will complete criminal screening background procedures before their name is presented to the church for election, as outlined in the Policy and Procedures Manual.

# Article Eight: Standing Committees

## Section 1 – General Overview

All committees are advisory groups and have no powers except those authorized and approved by church vote. Standing committees will be approved, and members elected from the Church body. The Nominating Committee presents each committee's specific duties and responsibilities, as approved by a church vote. Committee membership rotation occurs after service of a three-year term. When necessary, the Leadership Council may form ad-hoc committees for short-term purposes. All committee members shall be church members in good standing.

## Section 2 – General Responsibilities

**Nominating Committee** – Coordinates the staffing of all church leadership positions filled by volunteer workers except for the Leadership Council; the Committee convenes when necessary to consider all vacancies that may have occurred and makes nominations to fill all vacancies. The Leadership Council may additionally elect to hold announced signups for volunteer positions (in lieu of using the Nominating Committee).

**Personnel Committee** – While serving as advocates for the staff, the committee shall oversee and assume responsibility for personnel administration activities for all church employees and carry out the policies and procedures for personnel administration as approved by the church.

**Finance Committee** – The Committee develops and presents the annual budget to the church for approval, manages the expenditures of all budgeted funds, develops written guidelines, and establishes internal policies and procedures for the conduct and operation of the financial business of the church. The Committee establishes accounts and other financial arrangements with banks and other fiduciaries in the church's best interest. The Committee assumes responsibility for arranging and reporting on all church financial audits. The Committee establishes and monitors the procedures of collecting, handling, managing, monitoring, and reporting on all funds. Finance committee chairman, business administrator, and the treasurer will appoint at least two teams to serve on Teller Committee (three-year rotating terms) consisting of two members and one alternate each. Teams cannot consist of family members on the same team.

**Building and Grounds Committee** – The Building and Grounds Committee will be responsible for building use policies and shall work closely with the building and grounds supervisor, and with the business administrator for financial support and contractual execution.

### Section 3 – Election and Qualifications

Except for the Nominating Committee, standing committee members shall be elected by the church upon nomination by the Nominating Committee. Standing committee members shall be active church members over the age of 18 who have been members for at least one year. Standing committee members shall serve three-year terms on a rotation basis and, upon the completion of a term, shall be ineligible for re-election to any standing committee for a period of one year (unless the member is filling an unexpired term of 18 months or less). Nominating committee members shall be elected by the church upon nomination by the Leadership Council.

### Section 4 – Nominating Committee Guidelines

Enlistment to be on the Nominating Committee shall come from the recommendations by the Leadership Council with each providing the number of names needed for the current year rotation. The Nominating Committee shall have a minimum of three members, and they shall serve for three years. The Nominating Committee shall hold at least two meetings per year. The Committee should elect their own officers annually with the chair always being a second - or third-year member. The Nominating Committee addressed the vacancies of all other Standing Committees, Church Officers, Team Chairs and all Program volunteer personnel except for the Leadership Council.

### Section 5 – Vacancies

Vacancies shall be addressed by the Nominating Committee, except for vacancies on the Nominating Committee. Vacancies on the Nominating Committee shall be filled by the Leadership Council. Vacancies occurring within 6 months of new committee elections may not be addressed prior to the election.

## Article Nine: Church Programs

### Section 1 – General Overview

A team is an organization to carry out a specific task needed by the church. Team members can volunteer to serve and meet the need/task based on expertise, talents, passion, and calling. The Nominating Committee (or Leadership Council) will enlist a chairperson for church approval. Team members may serve an indefinite term. Program leadership is enlisted through the Nominating Committee to serve a specific program for a one-year term.



## Article Ten: Indemnification

### Section 1 – Definitions and Proceedings

It is the intent for the church to carry coverage for indemnity unless the named party exceeds authority or is guilty of reckless or willful misconduct in ministry, in accordance with existing insurance coverage based on church liability.

#### **Agent**

Any person designated as a trustee or leadership role of Church and listed in the Articles of Incorporation of Church. This can also include those as deemed as an agent as appropriate by the Leadership Council.

#### **Proceeding**

Any threatened, pending, or completed action or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative.

#### **Expenses**

Include, without limitation, all attorneys' fees and any other costs incurred in defense of any claims or proceedings against an agent because of his position or relationship as an agent and all attorneys' fees, charges, and other expenses incurred in establishing a right to indemnification.

### Section 2 – Successful Defense

Insofar as an agent of the church has been successful in defense of any proceeding or the defense of any claim, issue, or matter therein, the agent shall be indemnified against expenses actually and reasonably incurred by the agent in connection with the claim.

### Section 3 – Good Faith Conduct

Agents must act in good faith, in a manner he believes is in the church's best interests, and with such care, including reasonable inquiry, as an ordinarily prudent person in a similar position would use in similar circumstances.

### Section 4 – Insurance

The Finance Committee may adopt resolutions authorizing the purchase and maintenance of insurance on behalf of any church agent against any liability asserted against or incurred by the agent in such capacity, whether or not the church would have the power to indemnify the agent. The church shall have no authority to purchase and maintain such insurance to indemnify any church agent who violates State or Federal laws.

## Article Eleven: Mediation of Disputes

### Section 1 – Disputes

The Church will follow the biblical formula for the redemptive resolution of disputes as found in Matthew 18 and 1 Corinthians 6. Members must pursue every effort to live at peace and resolve disputes in private.

### Section 2 – Church Conflict

It shall be the practice of this church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to resolve conflict using the principles of Matthew 18. The use of biblically based and legally binding Christian mediation is required if parties cannot settle their disputes using this guideline.



### Section 3 – Agreement Procedures

Should circumstances arise that result in a member becoming a liability to the church's welfare, the church will exercise every reasonable effort to resolve the problem in a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance. If the exclusion of the member is determined to serve the church's best welfare.

(See Article 2-Section 7.)

### Section 4 – Petitions

A member may create a petition to gain attention to a grievance or concern. The petition must state the grievance or concern, be dated, and include a signature line for each member. Active petitions require the signatures of 1/3 of the active membership. The deacons or Leadership Council shall receive petitions meeting these requirements for review.

## Article Twelve: Licensing, Ordaining, and Commissioning

### Section 1 – Licensing and Ordaining Ministers

Licensing – When a man announces to the church that he feels the call to the ministry, the Pastor and Deacons may recommend him to the church and may, by a majority vote, license him to the ministry.

Ordaining – The church shall observe the following procedures when asked to ordain a man called to serve as a Baptist church pastor.

1. The church will express its approval by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any regularly called church business conference.
2. The Pastor shall organize a council to examine the candidate concerning his fitness for the ministry. Upon receiving a favorable report, the church shall proceed with the ordination.

Note: Licensing is a designation indicating the candidate is a minister for tax purposes and complies with federal income tax reporting and withholding rules.

### Section 2 – Commissioning Missionaries

Church members called by God to the work of missions may be presented at any regular church conference to be commissioned as missionaries by the church with a majority vote of the members present.

## Article Thirteen: Annual Responsibilities

### Section 1 – Accounts and Records

The fiscal year and church year begins on January 1 and ends on December 31 of each year. The church shall have an annual budget to serve as the guide for the financial operation of the church. The budget presentation to the church at the annual business conference shall include discussion and vote.

### Section 2 – Policy and Procedure Manuals

The Policy and Procedures Manual for this Church, cross-referenced with the Church Bylaws, may consist of the following sections and groups empowered to administrate any necessary amendments for church approval:

1. Administration – Staff / Deacons / Leadership Council
2. Facilities – Building & Grounds Committees
3. Finance – Finance Committee
4. Leadership – Nominating Committee / Staff
5. Ministry – Staff / Mission / Ministry Teams
6. Personnel – Personnel Committee

### Section 3 – Inspection of Records

A copy of the Incorporation, Bylaws, and Policies and Procedures of Church will be available for viewing by church members. Every Active Church member, in good standing, has the right to inspect all records, reports, and documentation of every kind, except that which is deemed confidential. No original copy of viewed reports of documents will be allowed to leave the church office.

### Section 4 – Auditing Procedures

The Finance Committee shall conduct an annual audit and arrange for an independent audit every other year and any other time the Finance Committee deems appropriate.

### Section 5 – Political Activities

To maintain the exemption from Federal Income Taxes, the church and other religious organizations must comply with requirements in Section 501(c)3 of the tax code. One of these restrictions is that the church does not participate or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate running for public office or any one political party. The church is not to engage in substantial efforts to influence legislation by way of any lobbying process. If a church wishes to have political personalities attend and speak to the congregation it is suggested to have equal representation of both political parties. The same is true for any political brochures offered to the congregation. This applies to local, state, and national political campaigns and personalities.

### Section 6 – Conflict of Interest

All reasonable effort will be made to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest involving church staff, church leadership and church volunteers. This includes involvement with current and potential vendors and bidding organizations. All staff and members must refrain from participating in, or influencing, any decision, ministry, or church action in which the individual or family member is materially affiliated. Potential areas of conflict should be disclosed to leadership prior to finalizing agreements, decisions, or church action.

## Article Fourteen: Property

If at any time the church considers altering its denominational affiliation, if the decision is by less than a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a properly called business meeting of the church, all church property will remain with the part of the congregation that agrees to continue to use the property for the purposes for which it was purchased and has been to that time maintained.

## Article Fifteen: Article of Dissolution

Being organized and incorporated, the Church operates as a non-profit, tax-exempt organization under the United States Internal Revenue Code. In the event of dissolution of Church, the assets thereof shall be liquidated and distributed for payment of all outstanding debts and obligations; remaining assets shall be distributed to a likeminded, Non-profit, Christian organization selected by a minimum 2/3 vote of active membership for the purpose of Kingdom work. No church assets shall be distributed to any member, officer, or staff of Church or any other individual.

## **Article Sixteen: Amendment to the Bylaws**

### **Section 1 – General Procedures**

Any of these Bylaws may be amended, altered, or repealed by a 2/3 majority vote at any regular church business conference or special called meeting. The Leadership Council can determine the amount of time necessary to document any received amendments, alterations, or repeals before being presented for a vote.

### **Section 2 – Amendment Styles**

It is expected that version control will be maintained for the bylaws to ensure clarity on revisions, changes and dates.

### **Section 3 – Notifications and Reviews**

See Article Three, section 3 and / or 4 on timing / notification for meetings.

### **Section 4 – Presentation and Vote**

See Article Three.

## APPENDIX ONE

### Statement of Basic Beliefs (v. 1.0)

This church affirms the statement of doctrine and practice known as the Baptist Faith and Message, adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963 and enlarged in 2000. A summary of the basic and most crucial doctrinal teachings of that statement are as follows:

**1. THE SCRIPTURES.** The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is the record of God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. (Matt. 5:7-18; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; 2 Pet. 1:19-21)

**2. THE NATURE OF GOD.** There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being. (Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19; John. 1:1-3; 4:24; Acts 5:3-4)

**3. MAN AND SIN.** Man was created by the special act of God, in His own image, and is the crowning work of His creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. (Gen. 2:4-7; Acts 17:26-31; Rom. 1:19-32; 3:10-18, 23; Eph. 2:1-22)

**4. SALVATION.** Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, sanctification, and glorification. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual perfection through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed. (John. 1:11-14; 3:3-21, 36; Acts 4:12, 16:30-31; Rom. 6:1-14; Phil. 2:12-13; Rev. 21:1 to 22:5)

**5. THE CHURCH.** A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a local body of baptized believers who are associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, observing the two ordinances of Christ, committed to His teachings, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. (Matt. 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Eph. 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11, 21; 5:22-32; 1 Pet. 5:1-4)

**6. THE ORDINANCES.** Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming. (Mark 14:22-26; Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; Rom. 6:3-5; 1 Cor. 10:16, 21; 11:23-29)

**7. LAST THINGS.** God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord. (Mark 8:38, 9:42-49; John 14:1-4; Acts 1:11; 1 Thess. 4:14-18; 5:1 ff.; Rev. 20:11-22:17)

**8. EVANGELISM AND MISSIONS.** It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. (Matt. 28:18- 20; Acts 1:8; Rom. 10:13-15)

**9. GENDER:** We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary sexes together reflect the image and nature of God. Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person. (Gen. 1:26-27).

**10. MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY:** We believe God's plan for human sexuality is to be expressed only within the context of marriage, that God created man and woman as unique biological persons made to complete each other. God instituted monogamous marriage between male and female as the foundation of the family and the basic structure of human society. For this reason, we believe that marriage is exclusively the union of one genetic male and one genetic female. Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5-6; Mark 10:6-9; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9. We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that anyone employed by the church abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.

**11. REDEMPTION AND RESTORATION:** We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. Matthew 18:15-17 We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with scripture nor the doctrines of the church.

*(In order to maintain consistency within the fellowship and community, only those activities, events, and gathering that affirm the doctrinal stance of the church may utilize church facilities and resources.)*