

# **Dublin Baptist Church**

## **Constitution and By-Laws**

**July 2013**

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# Dublin Baptist Church Constitution

## Preamble

For the purpose of preserving and making secure the principles of faith and to the end that this body be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the accepted tenets of Southern Baptist churches, which are affiliated with the local association and the state and national Southern Baptist Conventions, and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of the church, and to set forth the relationship of this body to other bodies of the same faith, we do declare and establish this Constitution.

## Article I - Name

The name of this church shall be the Dublin Baptist Church of Dublin, Ohio.

## Article II - Vision Statement

The Vision of Dublin Baptist Church is to be a Christ-like people who Magnify God. Mature Disciples, Minister to Others, and Multiply Believers.

- We will **Magnify** God as a worshiping fellowship, experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing His person, and responding in obedience to His leadership.
- We will **Mature Disciples** by helping **people** experience a growing knowledge of God and man, growing to be Christ-like in our daily living by emphasizing total commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the Lordship of Christ.
- We will **Minister to Others** with Christ-like love by unselfishly serving people in the church, in the community, and in the world in Jesus' name.
- We will **Multiply Believers** by evangelizing the lost as a dynamic spiritual organism empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible in our church, community, and throughout the world.

## Article III – Declaration of Faith

The declaration of faith is as stated in the current Southern Baptist Convention “Baptist Faith and Message” booklet. A copy of this should be attached to this document.

## Article IV – Church Covenant

### The Church Body

Having been led, as we believe by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God and this assembly most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to hold the Holy Scriptures as our guide for faith, daily living, and Church relationships; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, doctrines, and discipline; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and private devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our family and friends; to avoid any and all actions which would compromise or damage our witness and example to the lost, and to other Christians so that all that we do will be done to the glory of God; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our commitments, and exemplary in our behavior; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will as soon as possible unite with some other church where we can carry out the Spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

### **The Individual Member**

I have received Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, and have been baptized as a believer by immersion.

I believe God has led me to unite in membership with the Dublin Baptist Church family. I am in agreement with the following Dublin Baptist Church statements:

- Vision Statement
- Articles of Faith

Knowing that I am still maturing, spiritually, while on earth, my goals to God and to the other members are:

1. Protect the unity of my church, which includes
  - acting in love toward other members (Romans 15:19, 1 Peter 1:22)
  - refusing to gossip (Ephesians 4:29)
  - cultivating a positive attitude (Philippians 2:5)
  - maintaining Biblical integrity (1 Corinthians 2:12-15)
  - following the leaders (Hebrews 13:17)
2. Serve the ministry of my church, which includes
  - lifting it up in prayer (1 Thessalonians 1:2)
  - using my gifts and talents in service (1 Peter 4:10)
  - developing a servant's heart (Ephesians 4:11-12, Philippians 2:3-4,7)
  - participating in fellowship (Romans 12:5)
  - giving regularly (1 Corinthians 16:2, Leviticus 27:30)
3. Support the testimony of my church, which includes
  - attending faithfully (Hebrews 10:25)
  - fulfilling commitments (Romans 12:1)
  - inviting the unchurched to attend (Luke 14:23)
  - warmly welcoming newcomers (Romans 15:7)
  - living a godly life (Philippians 1:27)

## Article V - Character

### 1. Polity

The government of this Church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. Persons duly received by the members shall constitute the membership. (See Article VI of this Constitution)

All internal groups and officers created and empowered by the Church shall report to and be accountable only to the church, unless otherwise specified by Church action.

### 2. Doctrine

The Holy Scripture shall be its authority and guide of faith and practice.

### 3. Relationship

This Church is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation that are common among Baptist churches. Insofar as is practical, this Church will cooperate with and support the local association of Baptists, the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio and the Southern Baptist Convention.

All property of said Church is to be held for the use of and benefit of those of the membership, even though they may be a minority, who adhere to, maintain and propagate the doctrines, faith and practices of Baptist churches cooperating with the local association of Baptists, State Convention of Baptists in Ohio and the Southern Baptist Convention. A refusal of the membership, though they may be a majority, to adhere to, maintain and propagate the faith and practices of Baptists and to cooperate with the local association of Baptist, State Convention of Baptists in Ohio and the Southern Baptist Convention shall constitute such a deviation from the accepted usage's, practices, customs and beliefs of Baptists, that said majority shall no longer constitute the true congregation of said Church, and the title of the property of the Church shall vest in, and be held for the use and benefit for the minority of the membership, who do adhere to and maintain the doctrines, faith and practices of Baptists and who cooperate with the local association of Baptists, State Convention of Baptists in Ohio, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

If there is no minority to make adequate use of said property, then the title to same shall revert to or become vested in the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio, as Trustee, to hold and use said property or the proceeds therefrom to advance and propagate the Baptist cause and denomination in Ohio.

## Article VI - Membership

### 1. General

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist Church under the lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this Church.

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this Church and the conditions of such membership.

### 2. Candidacy

Any person, having affirmed his personal relationship with Jesus Christ, may offer himself as a candidate for membership in this Church at any regular service in any of the following ways:

By profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and by baptism according to the policies of this Church.

By Letter from a Baptist church of like faith and order (i.e. those that adhere to the tenets of Article III of this Constitution) provided such one has been scripturally baptized as defined by Article III of this Constitution.

By statement of one's faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, one who has been scripturally baptized by a church of like faith and order as defined by Article III of this Constitution, provided that the church that administered the baptism be a church that believes and teaches that a genuine experience of salvation is an eternal experience never to be lost.

By restoration to active fellowship one who has previously lost such standing in this Church. In all cases the Church must be fully satisfied as to the good intent of such applicant. A three-fourths vote of those Church members present and voting at a Church Conference shall be required to restore an applicant to membership.

### **3. Requirements for Membership**

All adult candidates for membership will be required to participate in a New Member Orientation, which will be determined by the Church, prior to election for membership.

The Senior Pastor, Executive Pastor, or a Deacon will meet with candidates regarding the duties and privileges of Church membership. After completion of new member orientation, the candidates shall be voted on by the Deacon body at their next regular meeting. A three-fourths vote of the Deacons present and voting shall be required to elect such a candidate to membership.

### **4. Rights of Members**

Only members of the Church are entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the Church in conference, provided the member is present.

Only members of the Church are eligible for consideration by the membership as candidates for elective offices in the Church.

### **5. Discipline**

It shall be the practice of this Church to emphasize to its membership that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The Pastor, other members of the Church staff, and Deacons 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 some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, the Pastor and the Deacons will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accord with Matthew 18. If it becomes necessary for the Church to take action to exclude a member, three-fourths vote of the members present at a Church Conference is required; and the Church may proceed to declare the person to be no longer in the membership of the Church. A spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance shall pervade all such proceedings.

### **6. Termination of Membership**

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

1. Death of the member
2. Exclusion by action of this Church
3. Transfer of letter to another Baptist church
4. Erasure upon request or proof of membership in a church of another denomination.

Actions pertaining to items #3 and #4, shall be the responsibility of the Deacon body.

## **Article VII - Ordinances**

### **1. Baptism**

Repentance and faith shall precede Baptism. Baptism shall be by immersion and in accordance with Article III of this Constitution. Baptism shall be administered by authority of the Church.

### **2. Lord's Supper**

The Lord's Supper shall be administered by authority of the Church. The Lord's Supper shall be observed as prescribed by the Scriptures and Article III of this Constitution. The Lord's Supper shall be observed not less than once each quarter and at such other times as the Church may designate.

## **Article VIII - Amendments**

The Constitution may be amended by a vote of three-fourths of the members present at a regular Church Conference, provided the amendment has been presented in writing and read at a Church Conference at least one month earlier.

# Dublin Baptist Church By-Laws

## Article I - Officers

The officers of this church shall be as follows:

### 1. Senior Pastor

#### a) Qualifications

In choosing a Pastor, the church shall look for characteristics as set forth in the following scripture:

- I Timothy 3:1-7
- Titus 1:7-9
- I Corinthians 13:4-8
- Galatians 5:22-26
- Ephesians 4:11-13

A Pastor must evidence a clear call from God to pastoral ministry.

#### b) Responsibilities

The Pastor is responsible for leading the Church to function as a New Testament Church. The Pastor will lead the congregation, the organizations, and the Church staff to perform their tasks.

The Pastor is leader of pastoral ministries in the Church. As such, he works with the Deacons, the Executive Council, and Church staff to: (1) lead the Church in the achievement of its mission, (2) proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers, and (3) care for the Church members and persons in the community.

It shall be the Pastor's duty to conduct the worship services of the Church; administer the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, preside at all meetings of the Church except where another person is elected to service; ensure that members of the church who are ill or distressed are visited and cared for; ensure that prospective members are visited and are extended an invitation to join the Church; to cooperate fully with all Church officers and Organizational Teams. The Pastor shall be an exofficio member of all Organizational Teams and organizations of the Church, and his counsel and leadership is to be recognized in all of them, but he shall not be entitled to vote.

When the Pastor expects to be absent from the pulpit, he shall notify the Deacons, and, if necessary, they shall assist him in securing a suitable pulpit supply. In the event of the absence of the Pastor by reason of serious illness or other emergencies, or in the event of a vacancy in the office of Pastor, the Deacons shall secure a pulpit supply.

#### c) Selection

Whenever a vacancy occurs, a Senior Pastor Search Team shall be formed, composed of the Chairman of the Deacons and Chair of the Executive Council, or if a Chair(man) is unwilling or unable to serve, another representative from the Deacons and/or Executive Council selected by the respective body, a ministerial staff person selected by the Deacons who shall serve as a non-voting advisory member and five additional members plus two alternates elected by the Church at a Church Conference. Nominations for the five elected positions shall be made by members of the Church during Sunday morning services, with each member entitled to nominate up to seven members of the congregation. Nominations will be reviewed by the Deacons who shall select from among those members with the largest number of nominations a slate that broadly represents the Church body. In this selection process consideration shall be given to age, gender, knowledge of and connection to various Church ministries, and worship style. Nominees shall be contacted to determine their willingness to serve. A ballot of five nominees plus two alternate nominees shall be announced one

week prior to a Church Conference where the election will be held. Church members will be able to vote for each nominee separately. No nominations will be taken from the floor. In the event that a nominee does not receive a majority of the votes cast, the Deacons will consider other persons receiving significant numbers of nominations and who provide the desired breadth of representation. This replacement nominee will be brought to the Church for a vote after one-week notice. This seven-member team shall seek out a Pastor, and its recommendation, after consulting with the Deacons, shall constitute a nomination. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the Church only one person at a time. In the event that an elected member of the team shall for any reason fail to complete his/her service, the Deacons shall select one of the alternates to take that person's place on the team.

After the Senior Pastor Search Team has agreed on a nomination and prior to any meeting of the Church held for the purpose of considering the nominee, the Senior Pastor Search Team in consultation with the Deacons and the Stewardship Team, shall contact the prospective Pastor for the purpose of reaching tentative terms of agreement. This written agreement shall stipulate the amount of salary, benefits as outlined in the Employee Handbook, and any other duties and obligations of the contracting parties, including a statement that the contract may be terminated by thirty days' notice by either party. The tentative agreement shall become permanent upon the Church extending a call and this prospective Pastor accepting the call.

In addition, prior to any vote being taken by the Church, the candidate shall be presented to the Church during Sunday services for purposes of a trial sermon, personal testimony, question and answer period and such other activities as will aid the Church in making an informed decision concerning the subsequent vote on said candidate.

An affirmative vote by secret ballot of three-fourths of those present and voting shall be necessary to approve the calling of a Pastor.

#### **d) Removal**

The Pastor may relinquish the office as Pastor by giving at least thirty days notice to the Church at the time of resignation.

The Church may declare the office of Pastor to be vacant. Such action shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's public notice has been given. Prior to any such declaration, due consideration should be given to Matthew 7:1-2; Matthew 18:15-17; and I Timothy 5:17-19. Any accusation shall first be taken to the Deacons who shall then consider such accusation and the validity thereof. They shall then counsel with the Pastor and/or make further recommendation to the Church. A meeting to consider the pulpit vacant may be called upon by a majority vote of Deacons or by written petition signed by not less than one-fourth of the resident Church members. The moderator for this meeting shall be as otherwise provided herein except that the Pastor shall not serve as moderator of this meeting.

## **2. Church Staff**

### **e) Ministerial Staff**

#### **1. Selection**

The ministerial staff shall be called and employed as the Senior Pastor, Executive Council, Personnel Team, and Church determines the need for such offices. The Personnel Team, in consultation with the Senior Pastor, shall write a job description when the need for a staff member is determined and shall submit it to the Church for approval at a Church Conference. Those staff members of whom the Church requires evidence of a personal call of God to minister shall be recommended to the Church by the Personnel Team and called by Church action.

After the Personnel Team has agreed on a candidate and prior to any meeting of the Church held for the purpose of considering the candidate, the Personnel Team, in consultation with the Senior

Pastor, the Deacons and the Stewardship Team, shall contact the prospective candidate for the purpose of reaching tentative terms of agreement. This written agreement shall stipulate the amount of salary, benefits as outlined in the Employee Handbook, and any other duties and obligations of the contracting parties, including a statement that the contract may be terminated by thirty days notice by either party. The Church may vote to terminate such employment immediately provided, however, if it does, the Church shall pay such staff person an additional thirty days from the date of said termination at his or her regular rate of pay.

In addition, prior to any vote being taken by the Church, the candidate shall be presented to the Church during Sunday services for purposes of a trial sermon (if applicable), personal testimony, question and answer period and such other activities as will aid the Church in making an informed decision concerning the subsequent vote on said candidate.

An affirmative vote by secret ballot of three-fourths of those present and voting shall be necessary to approve the calling of a candidate.

2. Supervision

The Senior Pastor shall supervise the ministerial staff, providing direction, counsel, and encouragement, so as to assist each minister in the accomplishment of assigned responsibilities. The Senior Pastor, along with designated supervising staff members, shall evaluate the performance of ministerial staff in consultation with the Personnel Team and other appropriate Organizational Team(s).

3. Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the ministerial staff shall be governed by their job descriptions. From time to time modifications to these job descriptions may be recommended by the Personnel Team and approved by the Executive Council.

**b) Non-ministerial Staff**

In an effort to protect the unity and fellowship of the Church, the Church will not hire church members and their immediate family members, or regular church attenders and their immediate family members, for any permanent employment vacancy. Prospective candidates for employment of the Church should be non-attenders for a minimum of at least one year before being eligible for employment consideration. The Church may, with Executive Pastor and Personnel Team approval, hire church members for temporary part-time employment as it meets the needs of the Church, not to exceed one year. This does not apply to auxiliary ministries of the Church, such as Mom's Day Out.

The Executive Pastor shall have the authority to employ and to terminate the services of non-ministerial staff members considering the recommendation of the supervising staff member and, as appropriate, with the consultation of related Organizational Teams of the Church. Non-ministerial staff members shall be employed within the constraints of the budget. The non-ministerial staff shall be responsible to the Executive Pastor either directly or through another supervising staff member.

The Executive Pastor, along with designated supervising staff members, shall evaluate the performance of non-ministerial staff in consultation with the Personnel Team and other appropriate Organizational Team(s).

The Business/Facilities Manager shall have the authority to employ and to terminate the services of custodial staff members. Custodial staff members shall be employed within the constraints of the budget. The custodial staff shall be directly responsible to the Business/Facilities Manager.

The Business/Facilities Manager shall evaluate the performance of custodial staff in consultation with the Personnel Team.

### **3. Executive Council**

#### **a) Membership**

The Executive Council shall consist of the Senior Pastor, the Executive Pastor, and seven lay members of the Church. The Business/Facilities Manager shall be an ex officio and non-voting member.

#### **b) Qualifications**

The lay members of the Executive Council shall be at least thirty years of age, a member of Dublin Baptist Church for at least three years, and shall have a demonstrated spiritual maturity with continued growth, dedication as indicated by personal conduct and significant involvement in the ministries of the Church, and the ability to handle difficult personal situations.

#### **c) Election**

The church shall elect lay members of the Executive Council for three-year terms, with two or three members being elected each year.

In June, an Executive Council Pre-selection Committee, made up of not more than 5 Deacons (as selected by the Deacon body), the Pastor and Executive Pastor, will obtain a list of men and women who, as of the second Sunday in September

- Will be thirty years of age or older
- Will have been resident members of this church for at least three years

This list will be evaluated for those who have a demonstrated spiritual maturity with continued growth, dedication as indicated by personal conduct and significant involvement in the ministries of the Church, and ability to handle difficult personal situations.

A letter stating that he/she will be listed as an eligible candidate to serve on the Executive Council, a response card and a return envelope will be mailed in July to each eligible candidate. The letter will ask each candidate to review references to the qualifications (see item b above) and responsibilities (see item f above) of Executive Council and:

1. Determine if he/she is eligible according to these standards to serve on the Executive Council
2. Willing to commit themselves to meet monthly, as part of the Executive Council
3. Prayerfully consider serving if nominated
4. Sign and return the card in the envelope provided, indicating a positive response, if he/she is eligible and wants to be considered. No response will remove his/her name from the nomination list.

At the morning worship services on the second Sunday in September, the Church membership shall cast secret nominating ballots for prospective lay members of the Executive Council, based upon the list from the above pre-selection process. Each member may nominate as many persons as are to be elected.

The Deacons will then screen the list of nominees and, from that list, select no more than the number of nominees to be elected. In the selection process the Deacons shall make sure that there will always be at least two lay members of each gender on the Executive Council. Prior to presenting any candidate to the Church for vote, this team shall require the candidate to answer a written questionnaire prepared by the Pre-selection Committee which asks questions concerning the candidate's qualifications. Copies of the questions and answers shall be made available to the Church membership prior to the time the candidates are voted on. No candidate who refuses to answer the questionnaire and allow it to be made public will be presented to the Church for vote. The Deacons will bring the names of qualified men and/or women whom it recommends for election to the Executive Council to the Church body at a specially called Church Conference in December. The

terms of those elected shall commence on January 1<sup>st</sup> of the following year. Lay members shall serve for three-year terms, after which time they may not serve again until at least one year has elapsed. Terms of members shall be staggered, so that two or three members are elected each year. If a member of the Executive Council, for any reason fails to complete his/her term, the remainder of the term will be filled by the process outlined above, but with election at a special-called Church Conference (if necessary) to expedite the process. If a person serves less than one-and-a-half years, he/she can be reelected without the one-year wait.

**d) Removal**

A lay council member may relinquish his/her position by giving at least thirty days notice to the Executive Council at the time of resignation. If a lay council member fails to tender his/her resignation upon moving away from the community, the Executive Council may declare the position vacant by majority vote of the remaining Executive Council members.

The Church may take action to remove a lay council member for cause. Such action shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's public notice has been given. Prior to any such declaration, due consideration should be given to Matthew 7:1-2 and Matthew 18:15-17. Any accusation shall first be taken to the Deacons who shall then consider such accusation and the validity thereof. They shall then counsel with the Pastor and/or make further recommendation to the Church. A meeting to consider the removal of a lay council member may be called upon by a majority vote of the Executive Council members or by written petition signed by not less than one-fourth of the resident Church members. The moderator for this meeting shall be as otherwise provided herein except that the Executive Council member upon whom action is being taken shall not serve as moderator of this meeting.

**e) Meetings**

The Executive Council shall meet at least once each month. The Executive Council shall elect a chair and vice chair, at least one of whom shall be a lay member, annually. The chair or vice chair shall call the Executive Council into additional sessions whenever the need for such arises. Minutes of the meeting shall be taken, and made available at the request of any Church member.

**f) Responsibilities**

The Executive Council has several responsibilities including, but not limited to:

- Acting in an advisory capacity to the ministerial staff.
- Considering routine and/or smaller business items and acting on these so as to expedite the business of the Church and reduce the number of special-called Church Conferences. Where a third party requires authorization, the Executive Council shall have the power to grant authority to the Business/Facilities Manager or Trustees to act on behalf of the Church in all matters except those relating to the purchase, sale, mortgage, lease, transfer, and/or financing of real property.
- Approving or denying changes in the budget (during the fiscal year) recommended by the Stewardship Team, when the cumulative total of those changes is not more than 1% of the annual church budget.
- Considering major items of business from Organizational Teams or from members of the Church. These items will be discussed and approved by the Executive Council before being brought to the Church body.
- Establishing Ad Hoc Teams to look at specific issues of the Church as necessary.

The chair of the Executive Council shall periodically communicate with the chairs of Stewardship Team, Personnel Team and Property and Space Team to become aware of any issues that may need Executive Council attention and/or team interaction.

**g) Checks and Balances**

At a Church Conference the congregation, by means of a 2/3 vote of members present, can overturn a specific decision of the Executive Council. The Deacon body, or the congregation by a petition signed by 25% of the "active resident" members (defined to be the average Sunday School attendance for the previous six months) can call a special Church Conference for a stated purpose.

**4. Deacons**

**a) Qualifications**

In selecting Deacons the church shall look for characteristics as set forth in the following Scriptures: Acts 6:3 and I Timothy 3:8-13.

**b) Numbers**

While not mandatory, it is considered optimum to have fifteen Deacons.

**c) Terms**

Deacons shall be elected by the Church for terms not to exceed three years, after which time they may not serve again until at least one year has elapsed. If a Deacon serves a term of less than one-and-a-half years, he can be reelected without the one year wait. Terms of Deacons shall be staggered so that, optimally, a proportionate number should be elected annually. The terms shall commence on January 1<sup>st</sup> of the year following election.

**d) Pre-screening**

1. In June of each year, a Deacon Pre-selection Team, consisting of the following individuals will each nominate up to 10 candidates based on the Biblical requirements for Deacon as set forth in 4. a) above; all pastors and ministers except mission pastors, all active Deacons, Adult Sunday School Teachers, minister-approved Adult Bible Study Leaders, Men's Ministry Chair, Women's Ministry Chair, Ministry Placement Team Chair, Family Ministry Team Chair and Personnel Team Chair. The Chairman of Deacons shall be chairman of this team.
2. Church members may nominate candidates by notifying any one of the leadership persons listed above in 4. d) 1. with the name(s) of candidates who meet the qualifications set forth in 4. a) and these names will be considered official nominations.
3. The Team shall eliminate any man from the list who, as of the first Sunday in December, will not be thirty years of age or older and will not have been a resident member of this Church for at least three years. The list will be evaluated against the Sunday School and minister-approved Adult Bible Study attendance records. If a man has not attended Sunday School and/or a minister-approved adult Bible Study class an average of twice a month over the past year, his name will be removed from the list of eligible men. In addition, the list will be evaluated against the Sunday worship attendance records. If a man has not attended a Sunday worship service an average of twice per month over the past year, his name will be removed from the list of eligible men.
4. A letter, together with a copy of the Deacon Covenant, will be mailed by the Church office to each eligible nominated candidate to determine if the nominees are truly ready and willing to serve as a Deacon starting the next year. The letter will include a request for each nominee to respond by phone, mail, or e-mail with either a "yes" or "no" answer.
5. The Deacon Pre-selection Team shall present its final list of candidates, indicating the number of nominations each received to Deacon Screening Team by September 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.

**e) Final Screening**

The Deacon Screening Team, shall consist of individuals serving in the following leadership positions in order to have a broad representation of the congregation: Senior Pastor, Executive Pastor, Chairman of the Deacons, Vice-chairman of the Deacons, Women's Ministry Chair, Men's Ministry Chair, Personnel Team Chair, and Chair of the Executive Council. The Church Moderator will act as the leader/coordinator of the screening meeting(s) held to select qualified candidates. Each active nominee will be required to complete the Deacon Screening Questionnaire prepared by this Pre-

Selection Team which asks questions concerning the candidate's qualifications as stated in I Timothy 3:8-13. Copies of the questions and answers shall be made available to the Church membership prior to the time the candidates are voted on. No candidate who refuses to answer the questionnaire and allow it to be made public will be presented to the Church for vote. This team shall review all completed questionnaires and prayerfully examine the qualifications of each nominee and shall discuss the office individually with each man to be presented by them, so as to satisfy themselves of his qualification and availability to serve. The team shall consider candidates in order of the number of nominations they received and shall bring no more names to the Church than the number of vacancies. All decisions to bring forward a candidate made by this team shall be by a simple majority vote of the Deacon Screening Team members present and voting. Any tie vote on a candidate will be treated the same as a negative vote. Candidates, who are not ordained Deacons, after successful completion of the screening process, shall be examined by an ordination council convened by the Pastor and consisting of all interested ordained men who are members of the church. A favorable report from the council is required for the candidate(s) to be presented to the Church for a vote.

**f) Presentation/Election**

After the steps set forth above, the Deacon's Screening Team shall present to the Church for election at a special-called Church Conference on the first Sunday in December, no more than the number of nominees as are to be elected along with a formula for establishing the schedule of the terms of those that are elected.

Balloting for Deacons shall be by secret ballot. The congregation shall vote on the nominees presented by the screening team and the election of each shall be by majority vote of those present and voting.

If the Deacons deem it necessary due to Deacon resignation, removal, or Church growth, the active Deacons may nominate, screen, and elect by simple majority vote an inactive ordained Deacon(s) whom the Church has previously elected as a Deacon(s) to serve until the next annual election.

**g) Removal**

A Deacon may relinquish his position as Deacon by giving at least thirty days notice to the Deacons at the time of resignation. If a Deacon fails to tender his resignation upon moving away from the community, the Deacons may declare the position vacant by majority vote of the remaining Deacons.

The Church may take action to remove a Deacon for cause. Such action shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's public notice has been given. Prior to any such declaration, due consideration should be given to Matthew 7:1-2; Matthew 18:15-17; and I Timothy 5:17-19. Any accusation shall first be taken to the Deacons who shall then consider such accusation and the validity thereof. They shall then counsel with the Pastor and/or make further recommendation to the church. A meeting to consider the removal of a Deacon may be called upon by a majority vote of Deacons or by written petition signed by not less than one-fourth of the resident church members. The moderator for this meeting shall be as otherwise provided herein except that the Deacon upon whom action is being taken shall not serve as moderator of this meeting.

**h) Ordination**

The Church shall ordain the Deacons before commencing their duties as such, except when they have been ordained by a church of like faith and order.

**i) Meetings**

The Deacons shall meet at least once each month. The Deacons shall elect their own chairman annually. The Pastor or chairman of the Deacons shall call the Deacons into special session whenever the need for such arises.

**j) Responsibilities**

In accordance with the meaning of the work and the practice in the New Testament, Deacons shall consider themselves as servants of the Church. With the Pastor and staff, and as the Holy Spirit leads, their task is to serve in performing the pastoral ministries' tasks of (1) leading the church in the achievement of its mission, (2) proclaiming the gospel to believers and unbelievers, and (3) caring for the Church members and other persons in the community.

The Deacons should set a good example in adherence to the tenets of our faith, loyalty to the Church program, intercessory prayer and visitation. Accordingly, each Deacon shall sign a Ministry Covenant that clarifies expectations, responsibilities, and accountability, before commencing his duties. It shall be the responsibility of the Deacon Body to draft and maintain the Ministry Covenant.

## **5. Moderator**

The Church shall elect a moderator and a vice-moderator. These shall serve a three-year term. The Moderator shall not be eligible for re-election until at least one year has elapsed. The moderator shall preside at all Church Conferences of the Church. In the absence of the moderator and vice-moderator, the chairman of the Deacons shall preside, or the vice-chairman of the Deacons. In the absence of all of the above, the Pastor or clerk will call the Church to order and a moderator pro-tem shall be elected.

The moderator shall become familiar with the rules and procedure of parliamentary authority in the provisions of these by-laws, and in all matters of parliamentary law governing deliberation of the assembly, the rules of the procedure set forth in Roberts' Rules of Order, Revised, shall govern.

## **6. Clerk**

The Church shall elect annually a Clerk and Assistant Clerk as its clerical officers. The Clerk shall be responsible for keeping a suitable record of all official actions of the Church, except as otherwise herein provided. The Clerk shall be responsible for keeping a register of names of members with dates of admission, dismissal, death, or erasure, together with a record of baptism. The Clerk shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the Church, preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give required notice of all meetings, where notice is necessary, as indicated in these by-laws. The Clerk shall be responsible for preparing the annual letter of the Church to the association. The Church may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to a Church Secretary who will assist the elected Clerk. All Church records are Church property and shall be kept in the Church office.

## **7. Treasurer/Assistant Treasurer**

The Church shall elect a treasurer and an Assistant Treasurer who shall be elected to serve a three-year term. The Treasurer will also serve as an active member of the Stewardship Team. If the Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer is unable to fulfill his/her responsibilities, the Church shall elect a replacement to begin a new three year term, unless the newly elected Treasurer is already an active member of the Stewardship Team or Assistant Treasurer, where they would finish out the three-year term they were elected to. The Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer shall not be eligible for re-election until at least one year has elapsed.

The Treasurer has three primary responsibilities:

- 1) Work with the Stewardship Chair and Business/Facilities Manager to oversee the overall financial practices ensuring they are consistent with the approved Financial Policies and Procedures (on file in the church office).
- 2) Work with the Business/Facilities Manager to ensure the accuracy of all financial reports.
- 3) Oversee the handling of all monies in accordance with the Church's Policies and Procedures, including the processing of weekly deposits.

The Assistant Treasurer will serve as an active member of the Stewardship Team.

The Assistant Treasurer has two primary responsibilities:

- 1) Oversee the work of the Teller Team to ensure the accurate reporting of monies received from weekly offerings.
- 2) Perform the duties of the Treasurer in his/her absence.

## **8. Financial Secretary**

The Church shall employ a financial secretary. The Financial Secretary shall work under the direction of the Business/Facilities Manager. The Financial Secretary shall work with the Treasurer and Stewardship Team Chair to ensure adherence to approved policies and procedures.

The Financial Secretary shall perform or oversee the following duties:

- 1) Maintain accurate records of all receipts and payments and the bank reconciliation.
- 2) Provide monthly financial reports for the Stewardship Team and quarterly reports for Church Conferences as needed.
- 3) Assist the Business/Facilities Manager with the preparation of an annual budget, at the direction of the Stewardship Team.
- 4) Ensure adherence to Church financial policies and procedures.
- 5) Record member contributions and provide quarterly giving records to all donors.
- 6) Assist in a required external annual financial review.

## **9. Trustees**

The Church shall elect three members to serve as trustees. The term of office shall be three years, one of the number being elected at each annual meeting to fill the vacancy of the one whose term of office shall expire.

The trustees shall, as provided by law and the action of the Church, represent the Church in all matters of legal responsibility regarding the purchase and disposal of Church property. They shall execute all legal papers relating to the Church and to the community as the Church may direct. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, negotiate for sale or purchase of property, or transfer and/or finance any real property of the Church without a specific vote of the Church authorizing such action.

# **Article II – Church Program Ministries**

The Church shall maintain ministries that will support the fulfillment of the Vision of the Church as stated in Article II of the Constitution. All organizations related to the Church ministries shall be under Church authority with leadership provided by our Ministerial Staff. All program activities are subject to Church coordination and approval from our Ministerial Staff. The Church shall provide the human resources, the physical resources, and the financial resources for the appropriate advancement of these programs. In order to protect minors, the Church shall implement and administer a screening policy for all workers involved with minors.

In order to provide stability to our core values, the church shall maintain the following:

## **1. Sunday School Ministries**

The Sunday School shall be the basic organization for the Bible teaching program and outreach. Its tasks shall be to teach the biblical revelation, reach persons for Christ and Church membership, perform the functions of the Church within its constituency, provide and interpret information regarding the work of the Church and denomination.

The Sunday School shall be organized by departments and/or classes, as appropriate for all ages, and shall be conducted under the direction of the Minister of Discipleship. The Sunday School shall have such officers as the program requires.

The need for officers will be determined by the Minister of Discipleship and the Executive Council.

## **2. Worship and Music Ministries**

The Church music organization, under the direction of the Minister of Music and Worship, shall be the music education, training, and performance organization of the Church. Its tasks shall be to teach music; train persons to lead, sing, and play music; provide music in the Church and community; and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

The Church music program shall have such officers and organizations, as the program requires.

## **3. Discipleship/Small Group/Age Group Ministries**

Doctrinal teaching, spiritual growth and development are a priority of the church. Its primary tasks are to provide systematic and graded studies related to membership, maturity, ministry and multiplication for all ages, seeking to fulfill the vision of making fully devoted followers of Christ.

Discipleship/Small Group/Age Group Ministries should be organized as the ministries require under the leadership of the Minister of Discipleship and other Ministerial Staff members assigned to specific areas of Age Group Ministries.

# **Article III – Organizational Teams**

The Church shall recognize three categories of Organizational Teams to assist the Ministerial Staff in carrying out the work of the Church:

## **1. Administrative Teams**

Administrative Teams are considered permanent teams of the Church. These teams are identified as Ministry Placement, Missions, Personnel, Property & Space, and Stewardship.

These teams will function according to the following guidelines:

**Selection:** Each of these teams will include a minimum of seven team members. Team members will be selected by the Ministry Placement Team with input from the Ministerial Staff member assigned to that team. The Ministry Placement Team will be nominated by the Executive Council. Administrative Team members may only serve on two Administrative Teams at the same time. If a team member is an active Deacon and a member of Executive Council, they may only serve on one Administrative Team. Spouses, or members of the same household, may not serve together on the same Administrative Team. At the quarterly conference in October of each year, the Church will vote to approve the members of these teams. The Ministerial Staff assigned to one of these teams is considered a permanent, non-voting member.

**Terms:** Team members will serve a three-year term with two or three being elected each year. Team members rotating off shall not be eligible for re-election until at least one year has elapsed. If for any reason a member fails to complete his/her term, the remainder of the term will be filled by the Ministry Placement Team. If a member serves less than one-and-a-half years, he/she can be re-elected without the one-year wait. Terms will run from January 1 to December 31.

**Chair:** The Ministry Placement Team, in consultation with the Ministerial Staff liaison and the departing Chair, will select the Chair for each team. The Ministry Placement Team Chair will be selected by the Executive Council.

**Meetings:** These teams will be expected to meet as often as necessary to meet the needs of the Church. Each team will be expected to meet at least quarterly.

**Operations:** Each of these teams will operate under a Policy & Procedures Manual approved by the Executive Council. These will be kept on file in the Church office. Changes to the Policy & Procedures Manual are to be approved the by the Executive Council. Other changes to these teams, including the addition of Administrative Teams, are to be approved by the congregation according to Article VII of the By-Laws.

## 2. Ministry Teams

Ministry Teams are defined as teams that assist the Ministerial Staff to implement and fulfill the Mission and Vision of the Church. These teams typically involve major areas of ministry, require a budget, and are designed to reach people or meet the spiritual needs of people. These teams are expected to work closely with and under the direct supervision of the Ministerial Staff member assigned to the team. Budgets, meetings and the calendaring of activities should be done in consultation with the Ministerial Staff member. Teams that operate under or are created with this designation will be determined by the Executive Council.

**Selection:** These teams will have between five and seven members. Team members will serve a three- year term with two or three being elected each year. Team members will be selected by the Ministry Placement Team with significant involvement from the Ministerial Staff member assigned to the team and the team itself. At the quarterly conference in October of each year, the Church will vote to approve the members of these teams. Ministerial Staff assigned to one of these teams is considered a permanent member of that team.

**Chair:** The Ministerial Staff representative, in consultation with the departing Chair, will select the Chair for each team.

**Terms:** Team members will serve a three year term with no more than two or three members rotating off in a single year. Team members rotating off shall not be eligible for re-election until at least one year has elapsed. If for any reason a member fails to complete his/her term, a replacement to fulfill the remainder of the term will be selected by the Ministry Placement Team. If a member serves less than one-and-a-half years, he/she can be re-elected without the one-year wait. Terms will run from January 1 to December 31.

**Meetings:** These teams will be expected to meet as often as necessary to meet the needs of the Church. Each team will be expected to meet at least quarterly.

**Operations:** Each of these teams will operate under a Policy & Procedures Manual approved by the Executive Council. These will be kept on file with the Executive Council and in the Church office. Changes to the Policy & Procedures Manual are to be approved the by the Executive Council.

**Creation:** The creation of a new Ministry Team requires approval from the Executive Council with support from the Ministerial Staff. Before a new Ministry Team is created, a proposal shall be submitted to the Executive Council and will detail the plan, purpose, function and budget requirements of the new team. Upon approval, the Executive Council will determine whether this new Team in a Ministry Team or Service Team.

**Dissolution:** Before a Ministry Team can be dissolved, it must be recommended by Executive Council with final approval given from the congregation at a regularly scheduled Church Conference.

## 3. Service Teams

Service Teams are all other teams that assist the Ministerial Staff by giving general support to the ministry needs of the Church.

**Selection:** These teams will be recruited by the Ministerial Staff with help from the team itself and the Ministry Placement Team. These teams will have as many members as necessary to fulfill their function.

**Terms:** These team members will be presented to the congregation in the October Church Conference for approval, have no term limits or a defined time where service begins or ends.

**Chair:** If it is necessary to have a Chair, the Ministerial Staff member and the team can select the Chair.

**Meetings:** These teams will meet as often as necessary to fulfill their specific function.

**Operations:** These teams should have a document that explains in detail what they do, when they do it, and how it is to be done. Changes to this document can be approved by the Ministerial Staff member assigned to the team. These teams will be monitored by the assigned Ministerial Staff member and the Executive Council.

**Creation:** The creation of a new Service Team requires approval from the Executive Council with support from the Ministerial Staff.

**Dissolution:** A Service Team can be dissolved if recommended by the Ministerial Staff member assigned to that team with approval from Executive Council.

## Article IV – Church Meetings

### 1. Worship Services

The Church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday evening for the worship of Almighty God. Prayer, praise, preaching, instruction, and evangelism shall be among the ingredients of these services. The Pastor shall direct the services for all the Church members and for all others who may choose to attend.

### 2. Special Services

Revival services and any other Church meetings essential to the advancement of the Church's objectives shall be placed on the Church calendar.

### 3. Church Conferences

The church shall hold regular Church Conferences quarterly on a designated Sunday night. A written agenda for the Church Conference will be presented to the Church prior to the conferences. Business items not on the agenda, but brought up on the floor of the Church Conference will be referred to the Executive Council or appropriate Organizational Team for consideration and action by the congregation, if appropriate. A three-fourths vote of the members present at a Church Conference is required to override the referral of non-agenda items and allow discussion and vote on the new business.

The church may conduct called Church Conferences to consider matters of special nature and significance. A one-week notice must be given at a regularly scheduled service for the specifically called Church Conference. The notice shall include the subject, the date, and time and place.

The quorum consists of those members who attend the Church Conference, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called.

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all Church Conferences.

## Article V – Fiscal Year

The Church fiscal year shall be from January 1 through December 31.

## Article VI – Licensing and Ordination

### 1. Licensing

When a member of this Church announces that he feels called to the gospel ministry, he shall first present himself to the Deacons. The Deacons may at their discretion recommend him to the Church. If the church is convinced he gives satisfactory evidence of his call, the Church may license him and encourage him to make preparation for the ministry. The Church clerk may furnish him with a copy of the minutes and a certificate of license as his credentials. It is understood that the performance of civil duties by this person shall be governed by state law.

### 2. Ordination

In the event that the Church has been requested to ordain a man to the ministry, the following procedure shall be followed:

- i). The Church shall express its approval of the candidate by voting to consider his ordination.
- ii). The Church shall form a council of ordained Church members to examine the candidate and report to the Church. The Church may invite ordained men from sister Baptist churches to serve on said council.
- iii). Upon receipt of a favorable report from the council, the Church shall proceed with the ordination ceremony.

If at any time a person ordained by the Church should voluntarily, and without Biblical reasons, cease to be actively involved with the ministry to which he was ordained, this Church should be given reason(s) for non-involvement. The Church shall reserve the right to withdraw ordination from any person ordained from this Church.

## Article VII - Amendments

The by-laws may be amended by a majority vote of the members present at a regular Church Conference, provided the amendment has been presented in writing and read at a Church Conference at least one month earlier.

### Amendments to Constitution and By-Laws

Amendment adopted September 8, 1982  
Amendment adopted December 9, 1982  
Amendment adopted April 6, 1983  
Amendment adopted March 7, 1984  
Amendment adopted November 14, 1984  
Amendment adopted May 8, 1985  
Amendment adopted December 10, 1986  
Amendment adopted January 14, 1987  
Amendment adopted June 10, 1987  
Amendment adopted December 9, 1987  
Amendment adopted October 12, 1988  
Amendment adopted June 14, 1989  
Amendment adopted October 11, 1989  
Amendment adopted April 18, 1990  
Amendment adopted April 10, 1991  
Amendment adopted September 11, 1991  
Amendment adopted August 12, 1992  
Amendment adopted August 10, 1994  
Amendment adopted October 12, 1994  
Amendment adopted July 1998  
Amendment adopted September 2001  
Amendment adopted April 2003  
Amendment adopted April 2004  
Amendment adopted July 2004  
Amendment adopted April 2009  
Amendment adopted October 2009  
Amendment adopted July 2010  
Amendment adopted October 2010  
Amendment adopted January 2011  
Amendment adopted April 15, 2012  
Amendment adopted July 21, 2013