

**CHURCH CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS MODEL  
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Reason For: I developed this model to serve as an information source for me and anyone else who may find it useful in full or in part.

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**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF  
(INSERT CHURCH NAME)**

**PURPOSE**

God in the Holy Bible documents for the church the foundational doctrines and principles by which he expects his people to live a life of worship and obedience.

Yet, God gives his people the liberty and opportunity to walk righteously in matters of human preferences that do not violate the doctrines and principles he has given to his people. I put it like this: I may prefer the color blue and you may prefer the color red. Well God likes both of them because he created both of them. The idea is that I ought to respect you liking red and you ought to respect me liking blue and we ought to walk on one accord with that respect.

A Church Constitution and Bylaws documents a body of knowledge that the church has developed and refined over a number of years.

This body of knowledge ought to conform to the Bible with respect to those doctrines and principles God has set for his people.

This body of knowledge helps to promote unity and mutual understanding and appreciation regarding authority, processes, procedures and reasonable expectation regarding the members and organizational elements of the church.

Yet, different churches and even a given church in different generations of people may have a different set of agreed to matters of righteous human preferences. These human preferences form human traditions apart from but consistent with those traditions set by God in the bible. Human traditions are good as long as they are doctrinally sound.

Constitutions and Bylaws document that which has been agreed to. These agreements can be changed but any change should be made with great care.

Any doctrinal error discovered after careful consideration should of course be readily corrected.

Matters of human preference should be changed only if there is a compelling advantageous reason to make that change. Otherwise, the church will be unstable as different humans will have different human preferences.

Whether it has to do with doctrine or simply a matter of human preference, even a new or existing pastor should show in scripture where any proposed deviation from the Constitution and Bylaws is a correction of doctrinal error or show with respect to human preference a compelling reason the change advantages the church not just because he prefers to do things a certain way. For this reason only the essential matters of human preference ought to be included in a Constitution and Bylaws as the pulpit and the pew ought to have an adequate measure of flexibility to do righteous things in the righteous way they know how to be effective.

This document provides a model from the perspective of a Baptist Church but may be used by any denomination by replacing the few occurrences of the word Baptist with the denomination name.

## **CONSTITUTION**

### **PREAMBLE**

This church declares and establishes this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the church body in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual church member and the freedom of action of this body in relation to other churches.

This Constitution and associated Bylaws provides a body of knowledge refined over time that guides this church so that it is not tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine and human preference.

The intent is to amend both the Constitution and Bylaws only when such amendment is shown to be useful and advantageous to this church or to correct an error.

### **ARTICLE I. NAME**

This body shall be known as (insert church name and address).

### **ARTICLE II. RELATIONSHIP OF THIS CHURCH TO HUMAN GOVERNMENTS**

The use of the word "Church" has reference to Jesus and the biblical apostles use of the word church (e.g., Matthew 16:18).

Although, the biblical use of the word church has priority to this church, this church is registered with the government for banking, general financial/taxation accountability (Luke 20:20-26), and other legal compliance.

This church shall always comply with the US Government use of the word church with regard to financial transactions and Federal/State/Local government taxation laws just as Jesus indicates (Matthew 22:15-22).

The church is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization and therefore donations are tax deductible per IRS provisions for churches.

The church shall comply with government laws and provisions so long as such does not interfere with the church conformance and compliance to God and the bible. This church shall operate under the First Amendment to the US Constitution especially with respect to freedom of religion, freedom of speech, and freedom of assembly.

The Church is formed for any lawful purpose or purposes under the laws of the United States of America, and the State of Arkansas regarding churches.

### **ARTICLE III. PURPOSE**

The focus and mission of this Church is to be led by the Holy Spirit to share the gospel of Jesus Christ, to train all in Biblical truth (discipleship) and to include each one in a community of faith and fellowship.

The church assembly is a place of worship. Primary worship elements include praise, prayer, and preaching and teaching what thus saith the Lord. The church assembly prepares people to go out to worship and represent God everywhere, everyday, and in everything. People do so by communicating/reporting and practicing the application of godly principles to everyday life at home, at work, at play, and at leisure.

Typical church goals/objectives:

- Worshipping God in spirit and in truth;
- Proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ through preaching and personal evangelism, and any other means consistent with the teachings of Holy Scripture;
- Equipping the saints through Bible instruction and study;
- Administering the ordinances of baptism and communion or Lord's Supper;
- Encouraging Biblical fellowship among believers;
- Serving members and non-members, families, and churches by providing for the whole person (spiritual, social, emotional, physical) needs, in the name of Jesus Christ;
- Encouraging, supporting, and participating in missions work, local, domestic, and international;
- Calling fellow churches to biblical faithfulness and purity through instruction and encouragement about the nature of the local church;
- Calling the nation and world to biblical faithfulness and purity through sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ in the local church as well as using technology.

### **ARTICLE IV. STATEMENT AND ARTICLES OF FAITH**

#### **General**

The Holy Bible is the inspired word of God and is the basis of our statement of faith. This Church is committed, as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ, to share the good news of salvation to lost mankind. The ordinances of the church are baptism and the Lord's Supper.

### **Articles of Faith**

- We believe the Holy Bible as the inspired word of God without any error (2 Tim 3:16-17).
- We believe in one God, existing in three persons, The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit (John 3:16; Gal 2:20).
- We believe in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ and that he is a true God and man (Matt 1:24-25; Luke 2:1-7). He died on the cross for our sins, He rose from the dead and ascended into heaven, where he sits on the right hand of the Father (Matt 20:17-19; Mark 10:32-34; Luke 18:30-31).
- We believe in a regenerated (born again) church membership consisting of persons old enough to understand their need for Jesus Christ.
- We believe that baptism should be by immersion and the Lord's Supper as a memorial to His suffering and death on the cross to be observed by the church in its present age (Matt 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-23).
- We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead, the everlasting blessedness of the saved in heaven, the everlasting punishment and separation from God of the unsaved in hell.
- We believe in the autonomy of the church. The church shall manage its own affairs and shall not be subject to any other religious body or organization.

Click for more [detailed articles of faith](#) document.

### **ARTICLE V. POLITY AND RELATIONSHIPS**

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. Persons duly received by the members shall constitute membership. All organizations created and empowered by the church shall report to and be accountable to the church. This church is not subject to the control of any other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist Churches. This church will voluntarily cooperate with and support appropriate districts, fellowships, and conventions provided such cooperation does not conflict with the church's own best interests.

### **ARTICLE VI. CHURCH COVENANT**

This covenant represents a goal which the church body should strive to attain.

Therefore, having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, (or any biblical variations thereof, e.g., baptized in the name of Jesus Christ – Acts 2:38), 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 strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; 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 kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, maligning, gossiping, and excessive anger; to avoid abusing intoxicating drink, especially to avoid getting drunk therefrom; to be zealous in our effort 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, as members, remove ourselves 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.

#### **ARTICLE VII: TYPES OF ITEMS REQUIRING A VOTE OF THE MEMBERSHIP**

The vote of the membership of this Church at a properly called meeting, as provided in the By-Laws, shall be required to effect the following actions:

- a. Elect officers of the Church
- b. Discipline officers by removing them from office
- c. Discipline members to degree deemed necessary
- d. Approve annual budgets of the Church, authorize any expenditure of the funds of the Church when such expenditure is not covered by a previous authorization.
- e. Approve any transactions regarding real property
- f. Approve the call and job description of pastor and other persons who receive compensation from the Church for fulfilling their assigned responsibilities
- g. Accept, reject, or otherwise dispose of any matter submitted to the membership of the Church by any church element and auxiliary, or raised by motion at a business meeting
- h. Move members to Inactive status.

i. Give letters of transfer or recommendation to members, or drop members from the Church roll.

j. Adopt, amend, or repeal the Constitution or By-Laws of this church

k. Any other action the church deems needing a vote by the membership

## **BY-LAWS**

### **ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP**

#### **SECTION 1 - GENERAL**

This is a sovereign and democratic 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.

#### **SECTION 2 - CANDIDACY**

Any person may offer themselves as a candidate for membership in this church. All such candidates shall be presented to the church at any regular church service for membership in any of the following ways:

1. By profession of faith and for baptism by immersion.
2. By letter from another Christian church.
3. By personal statement of Christian experience as a baptized believer
4. By restoration after being placed on the inactive members
5. By watchcare when person desires to unite with this church but retain full membership at another church.

Candidate shall be granted the right hand of fellowship by the pastor, officers, and church members ideally on the day in which he/she unites with this church but no later than the first Sunday after he/she unites. Once the right hand of fellowship is granted the candidate has the same rights and privileges to full participation in the life and work of the church. This includes a voice and vote in all church matters as available to other members.

#### **SECTION 3 - RIGHTS OF MEMBERS**

Every member of the church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church at a regular or special business meeting.

Every member of the church may participate in the ordinances of the church as administered by the church.

#### **SECTION 4 - ACTIVE MEMBERS**

An active members list shall be maintained by the church clerk office. The list shall include name, address, phone number, date joined, date restored if applicable, and next of kin contact info.

The amount of funds contributed shall have no bearing on a person's active status.

A person who is homebound due to illness at home shall be considered active.

#### **SECTION 5 - INACTIVE MEMBERS**

Inactive members are those members who are voluntary absence from services for an extended period of time.

A member shall be declared inactive after one year. This does not mean that they are put out of the church.

An inactive member list shall be maintained by the church clerk. The list shall include name, address, phone number, date joined, date became inactive, and next of kin contact info.

A person who is in a nursing home or similar long-term facility shall be considered inactive after 90 days.

The soul of each member is important to God and therefore to this church. Therefore, the Pastor and Deacons Chairman at a minimum shall make earnest effort to encourage the person to return to active status for discipleship, fellowship, and other support.

It is understood that a person may simply need some brief time to consider other opportunities or for self-examination. Once a person is noticed as not attending on a regular basis, the Pastor and Deacons Chairman shall informally inquire to family or close friend of the person who do regularly attend as to the status of the person. Whether further action is appropriate shall be ascertained by the Pastor and Deacons Chairman.

Once a person becomes an inactive member, the Pastor, a designated pulpit minister, or a designate deacon shall contact the person monthly either in person or by phone or my mail with the Pastor and Deacon Chairman made aware of the results of the contact. The purpose of the contact shall be to encourage return to active status to mutually provide support in this Christian journey. If a person requests no further contact in writing, then the church shall in writing let the person know the church doors are still open to him/her; but, the church will honor the no further contact request.

## **SECTION 6 - TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

- Death
- Granting a letter to another church
- Erasure (upon request in writing or proof of membership in a church of another denomination)
- Exclusion by action of this church concerning extraordinary matters (Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Cor 5).

## **SECTION 7 – DISCIPLINE OF A MEMBER**

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 other members of the 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. Let Galatians 6:1 be the guiding light of forgiveness and restoration upon correction for all members are important to the body of Christ. Principles of Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Cor 5 should also be a guiding light.

Should some serious condition exist, which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, every reasonable measure should be taken by the pastor and the deacons to resolve the problem. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance. Should it be determined that the welfare of the church will be best served by the exclusion of a member, the church may exclude such member by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the voting members present at a properly called special business meeting called for this purpose.

Any person whose membership has been terminated for any reason, which has made it necessary for the church to exclude that person, may upon that person's request be restored to membership by a vote of the church upon evidence of that person's repentance and reformation.

## **SECTION 8 - NEW MEMBERS ORIENTATION**

New members should become acquainted with the church through a new members class. This training will include but not be limited to privileges and responsibilities of the member and the church.

## **SECTION 9 – REVIEW OF MEMBERSHIP STATUS**

At the end of each year there shall be a review of the membership status of each member. Those deemed no longer active shall be moved to the Inactive list. Those whose membership has terminated shall be moved to or confirmed to have been moved to the former members list with reason for such movement.



## **ARTICLE II: CHURCH COUNCIL AND LEGAL AND FINANCIAL COMPLIANCE BOARD**

### **SECTION 1 – PURPOSE OF CHURCH COUNCIL**

The Church Council shall form the leadership board for making strategic and tactical plans, policies, and procedures on behalf of the church for approval by the church body in accordance with sound biblical doctrine. This does not include ordinary operations within the normal role and responsibilities of the various officers and offices/auxiliaries.

The church council shall serve the church by leading in planning, coordinating, conducting, and evaluating the ministries and programs of the church and its organizations.

Any decision, recommendation or policy adopted by the Church Council is subject to review by the members of the church, and may be overruled by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of church members present at a regular or special business meeting.

When the pastor position is vacant, the church council shall provide increased assistance to the Deacons as needed. This includes ensuring and evaluating the preaching, teaching, and practice of sound biblical doctrine on church property.

### **SECTION 2 – MEMBERS OF CHURCH COUNCIL**

The Church Council shall consist of the pastor (including an interim pastor), associate ministers, deacons, trustee, church clerk, and financial clerk and any other church officer/member deemed appropriate as long as there is an odd number of voting members. There should be no more than nine (9) members of the council. However, alternates may be identified.

The pastor shall be chairman and the Chairman of the Deacons shall be Vice Chairman.

When there is no elected or interim pastor, the Chairman of the Deacons shall be Chairman and another Deacon shall become Vice Chairman.

All members of the council shall have equal vote on all matters except the pastor (or interim pastor) who shall not have a vote on any matter but rather serves as an advisor.

### **SECTION 3- FUNCTIONS AND OPERATIONS OF CHURCH COUNCIL**

The primary functions of the church council shall be to:

- Help the church define its mission and define its priorities.
- Coordinate studies of church and community needs.
- Recommend to the church coordinated plans for ministry.
- Coordinate the church's schedule of activities.
- Evaluate progress in terms of church objectives and goals.

The Church Council shall bring all matters before the church body to make the final decision on the matter.

For emergency/urgent matters the Church Council is authorized to make the decision and later as soon as practical bring the matter before the church body for confirmation.

#### **SECTION 4 - ADVISORY OFFICERS/COMMITTEES OF CHURCH COUNCIL**

The Church Council shall as needed call in church officers and form committees from the membership to advise the council on church matters.

Those serving in an advisory capacity shall not participate in any voting by the church council.

#### **SECTION 5 – PURPOSE OF LEGAL AND FINANCIAL COMPLIANCE BOARD**

The Legal and Financial Compliance Board (LFCB) serve in the capacity similar to what is known in the general non-profit world as the Board of Directors. The LFCB shall consist of males and females who ensures the church comply with governmental (national, state, and local) legal and financial requirements and standards including reporting requirements. However, the Bible's requirements and standards shall be considered superior to the government/societal requirements and standard where there is conflict.

### **ARTICLE III: CHURCH OFFICERS AND STAFF**

#### **SECTION 1 – GENERAL INCLUDING LEADERSHIP TERMINOLOGY**

##### **Introduction**

Due to the autonomy of this church, this church officers and other staff may differ from other churches.

Care should be taken to distinguish, integrate and coordinate ordained and non-ordained positions and functions.

All church officers must be members of the church; members under watchcare may be a church officer if deemed advantageous to the church.

All church officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the voting members present at an appropriately held regular business or special business meeting.

One should be mindful that the meaning of a word largely depends on the context in which the word is used. When considering the word pastor one should be mindful that it may or may not indicate a person who is the head of a local church/congregation. For example, consider the prophet Jeremiah in Jeremiah 3:15-17 and Jeremiah 17:16. In Jeremiah 3:15-17 he speaks of a pastor as one who feeds the people with knowledge and understanding. Now one certainly does not have to be over a local congregation/church to do that. Moreover, in Jeremiah 17:16

Jeremiah speaks of himself as a pastor. Now certainly no one thinks of Jeremiah as being the head of a local church/congregation but rather one who spoke to the nation or society at large.

Accordingly, one should be mindful that the word pastor as used in Ephesians 4:11 is not intended to be a substitute for the word bishop given that a pastor is not necessarily a bishop though a bishop is necessarily a pastor.

In 1 Tim 3:1 the word used to indicate the function of a/the senior leader of a local church is the word bishop. In Titus 1, the word used to so indicate is the word elder. The word pastor appears only once in the KJV New Testament (Ephesians 4:11); yet, it is the well understood word in modern society to indicate a/the senior leader of a local church. The second well understood word is the word bishop which is indicative of a local and perhaps regional congregation/church.

Note that 1 Tim 3:1 indicates a function more than a title of address with respect of the office of senior minister at a local/regional church. Therefore, there is nothing in the bible that speaks against substituting the word pastor for bishop or even substituting other words such as Minister, Elder, Senior Minister which some congregations/churches do.

One should be aware that in some congregations, the term bishop may be used at the highest level and at lower levels the term elder may be used or other arrangements may be used. This is not problematic since for most though not all purposes the terms bishop, pastor, and elder are generally interchangeable.

For convenience and readability, this model primarily uses the term pastor to denote a senior minister of a local church since it is the most universally understood term with respect to local church leadership. Again, churches/congregations may substitute the appropriate words in their specific document.

The officers of this church shall be the pastor and assistant/associate pastor (s) if any. In the absence of a clear and compelling negative report, all ordained preachers who are in regular attendance (presence more often than absent) shall be respected, viewed as, consulted with, and employed as an assistant/associate pastor, to include but not limited to, stand in for the elected pastor in the absence of an elected pastor. The church officers shall also include the deacons, deacon chairperson, trustees, church clerk, Sunday School Superintendent, financial secretary, general treasurer, building fund treasurer, benevolence treasurer, usher president, choir president, evangelism and mission chairperson, hospitality/announcement clerk, youth director, youth treasurer, pastor's aide, kitchen chairperson, program chair person, sisterhood chairperson, brotherhood chairperson, church council, and others as needed.

Associate Ministers who are not assistant/associate pastors are not officers but are on the staff and therefore do not require annual election; however, if an associate minister also serve in one of the above offices/positions then that associate minister does require election for that office/position.

The senior musician (sometimes known as Minister of Music, Music Director) is not an officer but is on the staff.

The person or persons serving as officers at the time these Constitution and Bylaws are adopted shall be considered as elected by the church.

Pastor shall not require annual election or validation. All other officers including assistant pastor and associate pastor if any, shall require annual election/re-election according to the church calendar.

### **Expectations for Officers:**

- Be a member in good standing.
- Have good Christian and moral character.
- Support and participate in all church programs.
- Be willing to perform the duties of the elected position.
- Support the church through giving (tithes, offering, other).
- Attend Sunday School and Bible Study
- Not serve in more than two elected positions at the same time.
- Be timely and present and notify pastor or deacon if going to be absent or late if such will affect a given service/meeting

### **Election and Term of Officers:**

- Officers are nominated by pastor, deacons, or members of the church body.
- Church officers are elected in November of calendar year.
- Church officers are elected for a one year term and are eligible for reelection.
- The pastor and/or deacons may recommend to the church an officer be removed for unseemly conduct after due counseling by the aforementioned.

## **SECTION 2 – PASTOR**

### **A. Scriptural Basis for Pastor**

Eph 4:11-16; 1 Tim 2:8-15; 1 Tim 3:1-7, 15; and Titus 1:5-8 shall be the guiding criteria for a pastor desire, character, and ability. This includes being a male due to the biblical male headship principle regarding spiritual leadership.

The pastor like the apostles is a bishop (Acts 1:20; 1 Tim 3:1) and elder (Titus 1:5)

### **B. Role of the Pastor**

The pastor is a pulpit minister and must be ordained.

The pastor shall be considered an ex-officio member of this church family whether or not he is a formal member. As such the attitude of this church shall be to extend to him love,

respect, forgiveness, and opportunity for consideration of redemption regarding service at this church as the church extends to others. However, he shall be held to a higher standard than other members of the church family given his office.

### **C. Responsibilities of the Pastor**

The pastor is responsible to exercise faithful leadership in his personal life that flows into faithful leadership in the church. Therefore, he is responsible to put God first, those in his immediate family (if any) second, and the church third.

The pastor is the person primarily responsible for overseeing and carrying out the spiritual mission of the church. Yet he has some responsibility for ensuring the temporal mission of the church is carried out, for example as described in Acts 6:1-7.

The pastor is responsible for ensuring and evaluating the preaching, teaching, and practice of sound biblical doctrine on church property.

The pastor is responsible for leading the church, church officers, staff, members, and organizations to function as a New Testament Church so as to accomplish the full mission of the church.

The pastor shall work cooperatively with and demonstrate respect for each associate minister, deacon and other officers and staff of the church.

The pastor shall meet with the entirety of the deacons at least once a month so as to review the state of the church and to communicate anything that needs the attention of the pastor and/or deacons.

In between meetings, the pastor shall communicate routine matters for the deacons attention to the Deacons Chairman. Matters of a non-routine nature shall be handled by a specially called meeting of the pastor and entirety of the deacons. The pastor must understand the Deacons Chairman has no authority to act without approval of all the deacons except in urgent/emergency situations.

The pastor as the leader of the pastoral ministries of the church shall:

- Lead the church to engage in worship, fellowship, education, witness, evangelism, and other ministry.
- Be primarily responsible to proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers.
- Work with, train, develop, and support associate ministers of the church
- Be in regular attendance of prayer meetings and bible study.
- Care for the church's members and other persons in the community.
- Visits and ministers to the homebound, sick, and bereaved members of the church
- Participates in funerals and weddings involving members of this church
- Participates in fellowships, districts, and conventions
- Supports ministries of the church

- Devises strategies to motivate and encourage growth of members and membership
- Should consider continuing to further progress in study in the Word of God by an outside source (college, seminary or theology school).

### **SECTION 3 – ASSOCIATE MINISTERS**

#### **A. Scriptural Basis for Associate Ministers**

Pulpit ministers other than the Pastor shall be known as associate ministers.

Ephesians 4:11-16, 1 Tim 2:8-15, 1 Tim 3:1-7, 15; and Titus 1:5-8 shall be the guiding criteria for these ministers desire, character, and ability. This includes being a male due to the biblical male headship principle regarding spiritual leadership.

#### **B. Role of Associate Ministers**

Associate ministers consist of assistant pastor and/or associate pastor if any, as well as other licensed ministers who meet the cited scriptural basis, if any.

An assistant and associate pastor must be an ordained minister.

One Sunday a month shall be set aside for associate ministers to preach on a rotating basis.

Associate ministers do not receive regular pay but shall be paid on the Sunday in which he preaches as funds are available.

Associate ministers shall be trained, developed, and prepared to serve as pastor so as to be ready when and if the desire and call comes from God and some church.

In the absence of a clear and compelling negative report, all ordained preachers who are in regular attendance (presence more often than absent) shall be respected, viewed as, consulted with, and utilized as an assistant/associate pastor, to include but not limited to, stand in for the elected pastor in the absence of an elected pastor. This allows the minister to gain experience to include being prepared to serve the church in the pastoral role until a new pastor is elected if and when the pastor departs.

Associate ministers may be designated by the pastor or deacons or church body to stand in fully or partially for the pastor when the pastor is absent.

Each associate minister shall work cooperatively with and demonstrate respect for the pastor, other associate ministers, and deacons and other officers and staff of the church.

#### **C. Responsibilities of Associate Ministers**

These ministers assist, support, and submit to the pastor in his pastoral responsibilities and authorities. Their primary focus is also the spiritual mission of the church; yet, they may be called upon to focus more than the pastor on the temporal mission of the church.

In addition, these ministers:

- Shall supplement the preaching and teaching ministry of the pastor.
- Be directly accountable to the pastor.
- Undergo scripture based training in the Word of God from the pastor.
- Be trained in the order of service (time, flow of worship, etc.)
- Be ready to stand in for the pastor if the pastor is absent
- Be trained for and be a major participant in the church evangelism initiatives
- Be trained for future senior pastoralship in case the desire and call arises
- Should consider continuing to further progress in study in the Word of God by an outside source (college, seminary or theology school).
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#### **D. Ordination of Associated Ministers**

An associate minister shall be ordained when he demonstrates he is prepared to operate independent either as head of local church or other ministry including a spiritually focused nonprofit or perform weddings, etc.

#### **E. Discipline of a Associate Minister**

The decision to witness God's calling a person to be a pulpit minister is a monumental decision on the part of the person and the church.

As with other church members, problems that arise with associate ministers are often due to a misunderstanding as to the nature of a matter, what the Bible says especially doctrinally, and/or what the approved church policies and procedures require, and the appropriateness of that requirement. Thus, clear, open, and honest communication between all involved parties is extremely important with the aim to resolve the issue as soon as possible so that it does not grow and expand to include other church members.

An associated minister deemed problematic by the Pastor and/or church should be counseled by the Pastor. The associated minister being counseled should understand that the counseling is in his best interest as well as the best interest of the pastor and church. In the absence of an elected Pastor, other associate ministers should meet with the minister to discuss the matter. Furthermore, the Deacons may meet with the minister to discuss the matter. Furthermore, the Deacons may request an outside minister meet with the minister to discuss the matter. Finally, the church body may discuss the matter with the minister in a properly called meeting designated for that purpose and that purpose only.

In the case of doctrinal differences, it is proper to ask the minister to cease from preaching or otherwise presenting a particular doctrine from the pulpit for the pulpit presents one as an official representative of the church and what is said is reasonably expected to be the official position of the church. However, it is improper to require the minister to not present his

view of the matter in a bible study, Sunday School, business meeting, or similar settings. For it is in those settings that matters are discussed and all are expected to receive correction and a deeper knowledge and understanding of God's truth. Indeed, Jesus and the apostles went to the temple and synagogue and presented their view of God which sometimes differed from the temple and synagogue authorities but they did not do so as official representatives of the temple and synagogue.

In extraordinary cases, it is proper to ask but not require the minister to cease to occupy the pulpit to undergo rehabilitation and further training by the pastor and perhaps outside sources.

In rare cases where the associate minister disrupts the church worship services in extraordinary ways, application of Matthew 18:15-17 should be considered.

Taking disciplinary action against an associate minister is a monumental matter. Therefore, such action shall not be for personality reasons or disagreement with policies and procedures or conflict with the pastor, other deacons, or members. For those are all arbitrary and people-based. Congregational votes in a duly called business meeting is where the work of the church is planned and approved so disagreements and conflicts concerning such matters should be resolved there as to how the church proceeds to do the particular work of the church of which the disagreement is about. In other words, the change has the opportunity to overrule the disagreement and the minister's non-acceptance is of no effect after the decision of the church.

The goal is redemption and restoration, never un-licensing or un-ordaining a minister. It is improper to consider removal a minister's license and/or ordination.

Let Galatians 6:1 be the guiding light of forgiveness and restoration upon correction for all members are important to the body of Christ. Principles of Matthew 18:15-17 should also be a guiding light.

If the conditions become unbearable, all should always be minded that an associated minister is unilaterally free to go and associate with another welcoming church where conditions may be better for him and the church he leaves. Yet, the associate minister and church should seek and strive to ensure the issue is resolved and not carried to another church as such resolution would be in the best interest of all concerned including any church to which the minister may go to.

## **SECTION 4 – DEACONS**

### **A. Scriptural Basis for Deacons**

Acts 6: 1-7, and 1 Tim 3:8-13, 15 shall be the guiding criteria for a deacon's desire, character, and ability. This includes being a male due to the biblical male headship principle regarding spiritual leadership and temporal leadership assigned and expected of deacons.



The Seven of Acts 6:1-7 provides the prototype for Deacons. Acts 6:7 shows the importance of the Deacons for it essentially says because of the Seven faith and action the church enlarged and even the priests/preachers became more obedient to the faith. 1 Tim 3

## **B. Role of Deacons**

The role and purpose of the Deacons (sometimes called the Diaconate) shall be to servants of the church who discharge faithfully the sympathy, witness, and service duties of deacons of a New Testament Church as set forth in Acts 6 and 1 Timothy 3.

One should be mindful of Acts 6:3 where it records the words of the apostles:

(Act 6:3) Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

That effectively means the Deacons are about applying spiritual principles to natural matters for the benefit of the people. This means Deacons like all should give priority to attending to their spiritual sustainment and growth. They should not just consider themselves as concerned only with natural matters and neither should the congregation consider them just as that.

The Deacons shall operate as a board in that all deacons have equal vote and all decisions of the deacons regarding church matters shall be by vote recorded by the deacon's secretary.

Each Deacon is expected to have the courage of conviction to vote based on loyalty to God first, the church body second, and other deacons, third.

Each Deacon shall work cooperatively with and demonstrate respect for the pastor, associate ministers, and other deacons and other officers, staff, and members of the church.

The Deacons task is to serve with the pastor and staff 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 as in the case of Stephen if so gifted as not all deacons may be gifted for such, and (3) caring for the church's members and other persons in the community.

The entirety of the deacons shall meet at least once a month by itself as to review the state of the church and to communicate anything that needs the attention of the deacons, and possibly the pastor, and/or church.

A copy of the minutes of the deacons meetings shall be filed in the church office for access by the deacons for historical purposes.

The entirety of the deacons shall meet with the pastor at least once a month so as to review the state of the church and to communicate anything that needs the attention of the pastor, deacons, and possibly church.

In between pastor-deacons meetings, the Deacons Chairman may communicate matters of a routine nature to the pastor. However, non-routine matters will be handled by a specially called meeting of the pastor and entirety of the deacons.

### **C. Membership**

The Deacons shall consist of all active deacons elected by the church body.

All members of the Deacons shall be members of this church.

Each member shall serve as long as he is a member of this church unless one of the following occurs:

- Death
- Is no longer a member of this church
- Is classified as an Inactive Deacon
- Is terminated by the church body by resignation or disciplinary action
- Is classified as Deacon Emeritus

### **D. Ordination of Deacons**

All those elected to the Deacons who have not been previously ordained shall be ordained by the church. The Deacons and pastor shall plan and conduct the ordination service.

### **E. Responsibilities of Deacon**

- Shall work cooperatively with the pastor and other officers and staff of the church.
- Shall meet at least monthly on the same calendar day and time agreed to by the deacons and communicated to the Pastor and church.
- Shall appoint a recording secretary from among their board members who shall prepare a written report for the business meeting of the church.
- Shall cooperate with the pastor in visiting the members of the church and in the care and help of the sick, needy, bereaved, and otherwise distressed members of this church and the community at large to include administering communion to the homebound.
- Shall aid in the administration of the Lord's Supper and baptism.
- Shall be in regular attendance of prayer meeting and bible study.
- Shall be directly accountable to the pastor, deacon chairperson, deacon co-chairperson.
- Shall recommend a Deacon Chairman to the church body
- Shall recruit and train men of the church to be deacons, especially young men.
- Shall supply two deacons to serve as Chairman and Vice Chairman of Trustees
- Shall receive and act on any communication from the pastor or any church member or inform the pastor or church member why no action is appropriate

## **F. Officers**

The Deacons shall elect annually to one (1) year terms a minimum of the following officers: Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary. The Deacons may elect other officers as they deem necessary. No officer shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms in any one office.

If desired, the deacons may call upon the church clerk/secretary to record the minutes of highly important meetings of the deacons. This may also include the deacons recording the meeting using technology and having the church clerk to transcribe the minutes to document form and given to the deacons chairman.

## **G. Deacon Chairman**

The Deacons Chairman is the spokesman for the Deacons; he is not the decisionmaker for the Deacons. In emergency situations, he may make urgent decisions on behalf of the Deacons but non-urgent decisions will be made by a recorded vote of the Deacons at a properly called Deacons meeting.

The Deacons Chairman to be recommended to the church for election by the church shall first be elected by vote of the Deacons.

It is not the Pastor's responsibility to choose or recommend who is to be Deacon Chairman.

The Deacon Chairman shall work cooperatively with the pastor and other church officers and staff of the church.

If the Deacon Chairman receives communication from the pastor or church member regarding deacon matters, the Deacon Chairman shall bring the matter to the meeting of the deacons for consideration. In the case of emergency/urgent matters the Deacon Chairman may reasonably act and bring the matter to the deacons meeting for validation.

At any time of the year, if the elected Deacon Chairman requires replacement either by recommendation of the Pastor, another Deacon, or the church body, then the Deacons shall resolve the matter to include possibly electing another Chairman and recommending the new Chairman to the church for election by the church body.

## **H. Deacon Assistants**

Deacon Assistants are in training to become deacons.

Deacon Assistants duties and responsibilities will be decided upon by the deacons.

## **I. Deaconess**

The term deaconess has been used in a variety of ways throughout church history. Even in various denominations/churches today it varies in meaning. Therefore, it is important that this church clearly define what this church mean by the term deaconess.

A deaconess is a female set apart to serve on behalf of the church as set forth in the duties and responsibilities below.

A deaconess is not a female deacon as the scope of authority and service differ from that of a deacon. Only males serve as a deacon and only females serve as a deaconess.

Wives and widows of licensed and/or ordained preachers in good standing qualify as a deaconess.

Wives and widows of deacons in good standing qualify as a deaconess.

Other females who are licensed to minister may also qualify as a deaconess upon recommendation by the pastor and/or deacons and/or an existing deaconess and subsequent church approval.

Deaconess duties and responsibilities are:

- Shall conduct the preparation of the communion elements.
- Shall assist candidates at the time of baptism.
- Shall assist the pastor and deacons in the watch care and visitation of congregation members and their families.
- Shall prepare the elements for the pulpit.

## **J. Special Status Deacons**

### **1. Inactive Deacon**

- a. A deacon become inactive by voluntarily or involuntarily relinquishing his duties as a deacon.
- b. He may do so voluntarily because of some difficulty in his life that he needs to resolve or health or work obligations.
- c. He may do so involuntarily when the deacons place him in inactive status as a disciplinary measure.
- d. An inactive deacon shall not be considered in good standing for deacons role and function in the church body to include having no vote as a deacon.

### **2. Deacon Emeritus**

Those deacons who have attained the age of seventy (70), having served as a deacon for at least three (3) years, and having honored their office may be classified as Deacon Emeritus, at their request and upon approval of the Deacons and church body. They have no vote as a deacon.

## **K. Discipline of a Deacon**

Should a deacon fail to fulfill his duties the Deacons shall take appropriate action.

The decision to qualify one to be a Deacon is a monumental decision by the church. To remove a person from being a Deacon is even more of a monumental decision by the church. Because of the value and importance of Deacons to the church, every effort should be taken to avoid removal of the person from the Deacons.

As with other church members, problems that arise with deacons are often due to a misunderstanding as to the nature of a matter, what the Bible says, and/or what the approved church policies and procedures require, and the appropriateness of that requirement. Thus, clear, open, and honest communication between all involved parties is extremely important with the aim to resolve the issue as soon as possible so that it does not grow and expand to include other church members.

A Deacon deemed problematic by the Pastor and/or another Deacon should be counseled first by the entirety of the Deacons in a properly called Deacons meeting for that specific purpose. Also if deemed necessary by the Deacons, the problem Deacon shall be counseled by the Pastor and Deacon Chairman. If the Deacon Chairman is the problem then he shall be counseled by the Pastor and the entirety of the Deacons. The idea is that those not directly emotionally involved with the matter should be able to calmly apply spiritually and natural principles to quickly resolve the matter. The Deacon being counseled should understand that the counseling is in his best interest as well as the best interest of the church.

If further disciplinary action is required, the Deacons should vote to recommend to the church body that it vote to move the Deacon to Inactive Deacon Status for ninety days.

After ninety days, the Deacon may be moved back to active status if the problem has been resolved upon recommendation to and approval by vote of the church body.

If the problem has not been resolved the Deacon should remain on Inactive Deacon status for an additional year, renewable for one more year on the anniversary for a maximum of 2 years and ninety days of inactive status as long as the deacon is a member (active or inactive) of this church and the problem still not resolved. If not resolved within this timeframe the person deacon status shall be terminated under the procedures described elsewhere in this document.

Once the problem is resolved, the Deacon shall be moved back to Active Deacon status upon recommendation by the Deacons and approved by vote of the church body.

An Inactive Deacon does not participate in Deacons meetings except when invited to address his status or otherwise invited by the Deacons.

The goal is redemption and restoration, never un-ordaining a deacon.

Let Galatians 6:1 be the guiding light of forgiveness and restoration upon correction for all members are important to the body of Christ. Principles of Matthew 18:15-17 should also be a guiding light.

## **L. Resignation**

A Deacon may believe it is best that he resigns from the Deacons. This usually indicates some sort of spiritual and/or temporal challenge and difficulty the deacon is undergoing regarding this church and/or in other areas of life. Therefore, out of love and protection this church shall aim to encourage and support the deacon by giving him time to make sure such a resignation is best for him and the church family.

A deacon who resigns shall first be moved to Inactive Deacon status and the policies and procedures governing inactive deacons, active membership, and inactive membership shall be in effect.

A resigning deacon shall not lose his ordination just as if a pastor resigns he does not lose his ordination.

A deacon who resigns may apply for restoration in accordance with the policies and procedures defined for inactive deacon.

## **M. Termination**

In extraordinary situations, the church body may remove any deacon from the Deacons by a majority vote of the voting members present at a special business meeting duly called for that specific purpose. Two such affirmative removal votes shall be required ninety (90) days apart to prevent emotional votes from ruling the day. At each such vote the Deacon shall be given the opportunity to state his case and his statement shall be recorded in the church minutes for a historical record. The reason for the removal shall also be stated in the church minutes for historical record and notice.

Termination is a monumental matter. Therefore, termination shall not be for personality reasons or disagreement with policies and procedures or conflict with the pastor, other deacons, or members. For those are all arbitrary and people-based. Congregational votes in a duly called business meeting is where the work of the church is planned and approved so disagreements and conflicts concerning such matters should not stop the work of the church.

Termination shall be only for extreme moral defect such as that on the level given in 1 Cor 5 though not limited to the specific case identified in 1 Cor 5.

A terminated deacon shall not lose his ordination just as if a pastor is terminated he does not lose his ordination.

A terminated deacon may apply to the Deacons and the church body for restoration after one (1) year.

The Deacons and church body may ask the deacon to apply for restoration at any time after one (1) year.

## **SECTION 5 - CHURCH CLERK/SECRETARY**

The church shall elect annually a clerk/secretary as its clerical officer.

The church may elect one or more assistant church clerks/secretary to perform or assist the church/clerk in fulfilling the functions of the office.

The church clerk/secretary:

- Shall keep an accurate record of the proceedings of each business meeting of the church;
- Shall give required notice of all meetings where notice is necessary
- Shall conduct correspondence and be responsible for all records of the church, including records of the reception of members.
- Shall keep a register of the names of members with dates of admission, baptism, dismissal, death, and other appropriate information
- Shall receive designated reports from officers and committees to compile and disburse upon request.
- Shall file a copy of all reports, resolutions, and other official documents in the church office
- Shall be liaison between pastor, church, and community.
- Shall work with programs, church meetings, engagements and other activities.
- Shall be directly accountable to the deacons and the pastor.
- Shall perform any other duties assigned by the church.
- Shall file in the church office a copy of all official records of the church as it is church property and needed for historical purposes.

## **SECTION 6 - TRUSTEES**

### **Overview**

Matthew 25:14-28 provides the guidance concerning the qualities of a trustee.

Trustee is a major financial and facility management function of the Deacons. Trustees assists the Deacons in this function.

As such the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Trustees shall always be a Deacon such that a Deacon shall be at every trustee meeting so as to report the trustee activity to the entirety of the Deacons.

As such the Deacon as Chairman or Vice Chairman shall be the approving authority for benevolent expenditures.

### **Trustee Duties and Responsibilities:**

- Shall manage the financial affairs of the church.
- Shall keep an account of all the church funds.
- Shall make sure that all major financial transactions are made known and discussed with the deacons before a final decision is made.
- Shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer any property without a specific vote of the church authorizing each action.
- Shall sign legal documents on behalf of the church when specifically authorized by the church body

### **SECTION 7 – FINANCIAL SECRETARY**

The Financial Secretary is the Chief Financial Officer of the church, and is responsible for all financial and accounting matters of the church. The Financial Secretary is responsible for keeping accurate records of church finances and for reporting written information to the pastor, deacons, trustees, and church body.

Church financial records shall generally be maintained to the maximum extent practical in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). Segregation of financial duties to the maximum extent practical to ensure good internal control over church finances is an integral part of the accounting system.

The Financial Secretary shall:

- Shall prepare and present monthly financial statement to the pastor and deacons.
- Shall maintain accurate records of each expense and disbursement.
- Shall maintain accurate records of all church funds.
- Shall present a financial report for the church meetings.
- Shall pay all federal and other payroll tax as required.
- Shall maintain a balanced checkbook at all times.
- Reconcile bank statements with checkbook monthly.
- Maintain checkbook, bank statements and other financial records in fireproof file in office of the church.
- Prepare and submit financial reports to pastor, deacons, and trustees and church body monthly or as otherwise requested by those parties.
- Work with the Church General Treasurer in performing these functions.

### **SECTION 8 - CHURCH GENERAL TREASURER**

Church financial records shall generally be maintained to the maximum extent practical in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). Segregation of financial duties to the maximum extent practical to ensure good internal control over church finances is an integral part of the accounting system.



The following finance functions are the overall responsibility of the Treasurer and assistants:

- Shall meet with the finance committee each Sunday to record all income.
- Deposit of all church receipts in the treasury account the following day
- Payment of all authorized church expenses in conjunction with trustees and financial secretary
- Maintenance of accounting records to support all receipts and disbursements in conjunction with financial secretary.
- Preservation of all financial reports in conjunction with financial secretary.
- Making all records available annually for audit by deacons and/or trustees, and outside independent auditors if desired by the church body.

## **SECTION 9 - OTHER TREASURERS**

### **A. Building Fund Treasurer:**

- Deposit monies collected for the building fund.
- Write checks for repairs made to the building and other repairs as needed.
- Keep account of all expenditures.
- Report all income and outgo of expenditures at regular business meeting.

### **B. Benevolence Treasurer:**

- Deposit funds acquired from the general treasures.
- Contact deacons for approval on monies spent for charity, and needs of the congregation.
- Report all income and outgo of expenditures at regular business meeting.

### **C. Youth Treasurer:**

- The youth treasurer is to deposit all monies in the general treasury.
- All income and expenditures shall be reported at regular business meeting.

## **SECTION 10 – Christian Education Auxiliaries/Departments**

Christian Education auxiliaries are designed to instruct members and others in Christian (spiritual) education. Classes are held as needed.

Christian Education auxiliaries/departments are known by a variety of names. These include but are not limited to Sunday School, Bible Study, Congress for Christian Education or just Christian Education.

Leaders of these auxiliaries have a variety of titles; these include but are not limited to Superintendent, Director, Dean, President and Teacher.

Duties, responsibilities and qualifications of leaders and teachers:

- Shall conduct the affairs of the auxiliary according to general policies.

- Shall meet with the officers and teachers to discuss the problems and program of the auxiliary as necessary.
- Shall assure that assigned class or classes has an instructor as needed.
- Shall be in regular attendance of bible study and prayer meeting.
- Shall conform to the leadership/teacher model given below

In addition to the above:

Duties, responsibilities and qualifications of leaders:

- Shall have general oversight and direction of the auxiliary.
- Shall be directly accountable to the pastor.

Duties, responsibilities and qualifications of teachers:

- Shall be prepared to teach the assigned class
- Shall be directly responsible to the auxiliary leader

It is important that a local church abide in the Word of the Lord regarding all matters; otherwise that church is a rebellious institution.

One issue before us is this: are females permitted in scripture to be a Sunday School or Bible Study teacher involving a mix of adult males and adult females?

The answer is biblically no even though some have and do bow down to cultural pressure.

The issue requires not just a consideration of tradition within the local church but more importantly what should have been and what should now be done.

The church is a spiritual institution with both spiritual and natural processes and elements.

Therefore the context requires words to be examined first for their spiritual implications and secondly for their natural implications.

Since the Bible uses the term teach and its variants, it is important that we (the local church) use it in the way the Bible uses it with respect to teaching the Bible.

Biblically a teacher is expected to be a content or subject matter expert, with the authority to oversee, instruct, correct and grade students who possess no, little, or much right and/or wrong understanding of the subject matter or content.

Since the Bible is a spiritual book, the authority possessed must by definition be spiritual authority. This is markedly different than a computer book where the authority in that case for the teacher would be natural authority involving solely natural (non-spiritual) matters. Women teaching and/or having authority over men regarding such non-spiritual auxiliaries/matters is not

forbidden by scripture. However, women teaching and/or having authority over men regarding spiritual auxiliaries/matters is forbidden by multiple scriptures.

Some Sunday School sessions have someone give highlights of the lesson of the day. This is given to the entirety of the Sunday School after the classes reassemble together. It is appropriate for anyone including females and children to give such highlights. For they do so not as a teacher but as a speaker.

For simplicity the below uses the Sunday School as the model for policies regarding leadership and instruction. The same principles shall apply to all Christian Education auxiliaries.

**Sunday School Officers:**

Superintendent - Male

Assistant Superintendent - Male

Secretary/Recorder - Male or Female

**Sunday School Individual Classes:**

Adult Men: (18+) - Male Teacher

Adult Women (18+) – Male or Female Teacher, Female Preferred

Children (17-) – Male or Female Teacher, Female Preferred

Sunday School Combined Adult (18+) Class - Male Teacher

Lesson Review/Highlights Speaker – Male, Female, Children or Adult

Foundational Scriptures: John 8:31-32; Eph 4:1 Tim 2:11-12; 2 Tim 2:15; 2 Tim 4:1-5; 1 Cor 11:1-16

## **SECTION 11-AUXILIARY HEADS**

### **Overview:**

Auxiliary heads are responsible for their groups maintaining harmony and fulfilling the functions for which the organization was formed.

Auxiliary heads are responsible for making and maintaining the rules which govern their respective organization. This includes considering establishment of a Vice Chairperson and Secretary and Treasurer as needed.

Auxiliary heads exist as follows:

**Brotherhood Chairperson:**

The function of this group is to provide fellowship, education, training, and support on being a godly man, husband, father, brother, and friend within the church, the community, and society at large.

Target ages for this group are 16 and up.

This group shall be responsible for the church annual men day and periodic men gatherings.

The church shall afford men of this group as recommended by the group to speak and/or otherwise present at least quarterly during an afternoon or evening service even in place of weekly bible study if necessary. Speakers ideally should be from this church but may be from other churches. Such speakers shall not be pulpit ministers as they have opportunity to speak at other times. Part of a morning service may be used during extraordinary times.

Reference Scriptures: In the spirit of Titus 2:1-8 substituting male oriented words for female oriented words as applicable since most but not all apply to both male and female

**Sisterhood Chairperson:**

The function of this group is to provide fellowship, education, training, and support on being a godly woman, wife, mother, sister, and friend within the church, the community, and society at large.

Target ages for this group are 16 and up.

This group shall be responsible for the church annual women day and periodic women gatherings.

The church shall afford females of this group as recommended by the group to speak and/or otherwise present at least quarterly during an afternoon or evening service even in place of weekly bible study if necessary. Speakers ideally should be from this church but may be from other churches. Such females may speak from the floor not the pulpit. Part of a morning service may be used during extraordinary times.

*The Mission*, the Official Quarterly Study Guide of the Woman's Auxiliary to the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc, may be used for teaching in addition to other resources.

Reference Scriptures: In the spirit of Titus 2:1-8 substituting female oriented words for male oriented words as applicable since most but not all apply to both male and female

**Usher Chairperson:**

The function of this group is to provide training and support for all ushers groups in the church.

**Choir President:**

The function of this group is to provide music at all church sponsored functions as appropriate whether in or out of the church building.

The choir president is responsible to work with the music director in planning and coordinating all musical programs of the church, including all rehearsals.

**Evangelism and Missions Chairperson:**

This group consists of dedicated men and women of the church to aid and assist the church in the Lord's work and to also help and aid the members of the church spiritually and physically at a minimum of quarterly.

This should be a joint effort between associate ministers, deacons, brotherhood, and sisterhood. Therefore, officers should be as follows:

- Chairperson – Associate Minister
- 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chairperson – Deacon
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairperson – Brother from Brotherhood
- Associate Chairperson for Missions – Sister from Sisterhood

In this context, evangelism has to do with meeting spiritual/eternal needs and missions has to do with meeting natural/temporal needs.

Emphasis should not be on bible study within the church walls but rather on going out into the community to invite others to Christ, return to fellowship, and contribute to meeting the day to day temporal needs of the people through direct benevolent giving and/or indirectly by referring persons to helpful community organizations. If the need for occasional “Bible Study” to deal with a particular matter arises it should be addressed within the context of the regular church Bible Study or other mixed teaching forums. However, if the need is compelling so as to need addressing in this auxiliary it shall be led and conducted by one of the male Chairpersons.

Sample Scriptural References: Luke 19:10; Matthew 25:31-46; 2 Tim 4:5; Acts 8:4-38; Acts 18:24-26

**Kitchen Chairperson:**

The kitchen chairperson shall be responsible for coordination and overseeing the activities of the kitchen and to ensure that the kitchen is kept clean, and adequate supplies are on hand.

**Youth Director:**

The youth director is responsible for planning as well as carrying out youth programs and activities inside and outside of the church. These activities are to be coordinated with the activities of the church.

**Pastor's Aide Chairperson:**

The pastor's aide is responsible for providing for the personal needs of the pastor.

**Program Chairperson:**

The program chairperson is responsible for preparing the order of service for all programs, announcements, publications, and contacting the pastor for approval.

## **Hospitality and Announcement Clerk Director:**

The hospitality clerk function is to welcome visitors to the church and collect contact information as necessary for passage to the pastor, deacons, and church clerk. For first time visitors to the church, a letter for signature by the pastor, deacon chairman, and church clerk shall be prepared to send to the visitor thanking them for their attendance, inviting them back, and offering consideration of support for any spiritual and/or temporal need.

The announcement clerk function is to compile and make announcements to the church body on Sunday Mornings and other appropriate times. This includes the use of technology such as Facebook and text messages as appropriate. To support text messages, the announcement clerk shall have a list of the phone numbers of the pastor, associate minister, deacons, and all officers and staff and auxiliary heads.

## **ARTICLE IV: PAID PERSONNEL OF THE CHURCH**

### **General**

Personnel paid regularly by the church either as an employee or contractor shall be the Pastor, Musicians, Custodian, and Groundskeeper.

Pastor and Musicians shall be paid weekly.

Custodian shall be paid monthly.

Groundskeeper shall be paid the Sunday after the work is done.

Other pulpit ministers shall also be paid whenever they are the preacher of the day for the Sunday morning worship service.

The amount of pay shall be approved annually by the church but may be modified during the year as the need arises.

Pay increases/decreases shall be periodically considered annually by the church body but may be considered by the church body during the year as the need arises.

Pay decreases shall be considered any time the church finds itself in a financial crisis.

### **Senior Musician duties and responsibilities:**

- Shall have the general oversight and direction of all choirs.
- Shall act as a liaison between pastor and music staff.
- Shall ensure the attendance of all musicians for all rehearsals and worship services.
- Shall organize and schedule vocal and instrumental rehearsals.
- shall provide a set agenda for rehearsals and worship services to the choir.
- Shall attend a gospel music workshop when needed and approved by the body.

- Shall be in regular attendance of prayer meeting and bible study.
- Shall be directly accountable to the choir director/president, deacons and pastor.
- Shall attend all church functions.
- First loyalty shall be to this church.

#### **Custodian and Groundskeeper:**

The duties and responsibilities of this person or persons shall have general charge and upkeep of the buildings and property including interior and exterior and shall report to the chairperson of the deacons.

### **ARTICLE V: RETENTION, PAYMENT, AND DEPARTURE OF PASTOR**

#### **SECTION 1 – GENERAL**

The pastor, thus elected, shall be called and serve for an indefinite period of time until the relationship is terminated, either by death or his request or the church's request

An elected pastor shall be designated Pastor-Elect until installed which shall take place after a three (3) month probation period

#### **SECTION 2 – PASTORAL PAY POLICIES**

If funds allow, the pastor weekly pay the church is willing to pay may use a sliding scale based on years of pastoral experience and optionally religious formal education.

Pay increases shall be considered annually and shall depend on the then present pay, performance, and the financial condition of the church.

There is no advance pay as pay will be made after the morning service

There is no retirement plan

Paid Vacation: 2 weeks a year after 1 year of service

Sick Leave: 2 weeks a year after 1 year of service

Pastor pays the other minister if he requests another minister to preach in his stead during regular Sunday morning services. Exceptions are church approved conferences, meetings, and one Sunday a month when an associate minister preaches in which case the church will pay the rate to the associate minister as determined by the church. Also, if the church requests another preacher during special morning services then the church will pay the other preacher, for example, if church anniversary is held during regular Sunday morning service.

Salary and benefits which are previously fixed may be changed and adjusted by the deacons and body.

In the absence of the pastor whether for vacation, conferences, special meetings, or sickness, the pastor will appoint a designee to fill the pulpit.

The pastor should meet with all auxiliary heads for recommendation of speaker for their annual days. Should a pastor have a need to consult with an auxiliary head over differences, the pastor should inform the deacons of the consultation prior to meeting with involved party or parties. A deacon or deacons should be present at time of the consultation.

### **SECTION 3 – PASTOR DEPARTURE**

#### **Pastor Resignation**

If the pastor wishes to resign, it is requested he gives A fourteen (14) to thirty (30) day notice.

The church shall make the final decision at a called business meeting by a majority vote to accept the resignation or to encourage the pastor not to resign if it is a known or revealed issue that can be resolved without resignation.

#### **Recall/Termination of Pastor**

The pastor may be recalled/terminated by the church at a church meeting called for that purpose, of which at least two weeks' notice to the church has been given.

If by the church's request, the deacons shall have the right to suspend the pastor by a majority vote.

The church shall make the final decision at a called business meeting by a majority vote to reinstate or terminate the pastor.

The termination vote shall be by secret ballot and an affirmative vote of three fourths (3/4) of the voting members present shall be necessary to terminate the pastor at which time the office of pastor shall be declared vacant.

A termination meeting may be called by a written petition signed by not less than one fourth (1/4) of the active and present voting members; no absentee voting is allowed.

The moderator for this recall meeting shall be the church clerk, or in the clerk's absence or refusal to serve, the Deacons Chairman shall call the church to order and preside over the election of an acting moderator. The pastor will not serve as the moderator for this meeting. In the event the pastor is terminated, it will be effective immediately.

No severance pay shall be authorized even if the termination is no for gross misconduct.

#### **Retention of Pastor Property**



- Upon termination, retirement or resignation of the pastor, he shall retain the following properties:
- All robe and vestment.
- All personal effects in the study.

No other items shall be taken without the expressed approval of the deacons.

## **ARTICLE VI: FILLING A PASTORAL VACANCY**

### **SECTION 1 – GENERAL**

A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs.

This church holds to the foundational biblical model of spiritual authority as set forth in the holy scriptures concerning the apostles and the seven with respect to bishops/pastors and deacons such that from Genesis to Revelation there is no biblical example of a female who stood before and exercised spiritual authority over the assembly of believers in the one true God. Therefore, the **elected pastor** as well as any **interim pastor** shall be a **male pastor** and the pastor search announcement shall explicitly state the search is for a male pastor so there is no confusion as to scope of expected applications. An example statement should go something like: The church is prayerfully seeking a full-time **male** pastor...

Once the pastor position is vacant, the deacons take on the day-to-day leadership of the church in coordination with the other church officers and staff and the church body.

Upon departure of the pastor, the Deacons shall be responsible for supplying the pulpit with a pastor of the day.

The Deacons shall utilize member pulpit ministers as well as bring in other ministers.

The Deacons shall consider recommending to the church an interim pastor from known available ordained ministers interested in serving as interim pastor.

### **SECTION 2 – INTERIM PASTOR**

The interim pastor pay shall be negotiated by the deacons and affirmed by the church body.

The interim pastor has the same authorities, duties and responsibilities as the regular pastor except as noted below or otherwise agreed to with the interim pastor by the deacons and church body.

The interim pastor will be the primary deliver of Sunday Morning sermons; however, he should follow the provisions established for associate ministers as well.

In addition to regular pastor provisions, the interim pastor:

- Provides mentor/adviser services to the deacons, other officers, and the pastor search committee as needed during the transition to a new pastor;
- Assists the church in refining church mission, organization, and vision, as well as with conflict resolution and emergency counseling

The interim pastor shall not be required to:

- Attend or otherwise participate in church events outside of Sunday Morning Worship Services except for Church Anniversary
- Participate in Sunday School, midweek prayer meetings or bible studies as the morning worship service affords him opportunity for such functions and other church members can lead, teach and pray during those events.
- The interim pastor may however choose at his convenience to participate in any church events and functions.

### **SECTION 3 – PASTOR SEARCH**

#### **General**

Upon the office of the Pastor becoming vacant, the church shall endeavor to timely form a Pastor Search Committee (PSC).

The PSC should consist of five (5) to seven (7) active members of the church.

A Deacon shall serve as the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the committee.

The PSC shall seek out and submit to the church body for voting, pastor nominees that meet the church standards for a pastor.

The PSC disbands once a pastor is elected.

#### **Pastor Search Process Overview**

- PSC issues Pastor Search Announcement (PSA) containing opening and closing date, church email, standards, etc.
- PSC receives application packages from candidates.
- PSC acknowledges receipt of application package by email within one (1) week of receipt.
- PSC reviews each candidate application package within one (1) month.
- PSC sends letter to any candidate whose application package is rejected.
- PSC schedules candidates for Pastor of the Day Sunday Morning Service, Bible Study, and Meet and Greet

- PSC discusses Pre-Call Agreement with candidate (compensation and benefits, etc.)
- PSC receives signed Pre-Call Agreement from candidate else candidate not included in vote.
- PSC notifies each candidate of the date the church will vote on the candidate.
- The church body votes:
  - Announced two Sundays immediately prior to vote
  - All candidates on ballot
  - Only active members should vote; integrity of the member is important
  - Absentee voting shall be allowed for the homebound, those working, and those who will be out of town.
  - Candidate with  $\frac{3}{4}$  of votes is elected
  - If no single candidate gets  $\frac{3}{4}$  of vote, top two will have a runoff election
  - If elected candidate declines, church will vote on second place candidate
  - If church rejects second place candidate, the process will start over
  - PSC notifies each candidate of status as to elected or not elected.

### **Pastor Search Announcement**

The PSC shall issue the PSA with the opening and closing date with a minimum of three (3) months between opening and closing.

The PSA shall state that the search is for a male pastor with desire, character, and ability based on the guiding criteria set forth in

Eph 4:11-16; 1 Tim 2:8-15; 1 Tim 3:1-7, 15; and Titus 1:5-8.

The PSA shall state that ordination is not required as ordination can be arranged if the candidate is elected.

The PSA shall require each candidate to submit an application package whose minimum required content is given below.

The PSC shall not require a particular resume format to be used but only the required content to be present in the resume.

The PSA shall be made to the public using various means to include but not limited to:

- Submission to local/area Districts Moderators (e.g., Ozan, Southwest Arkansas, Zion in Texas)
- Submission to local/area Ministers Groups (e.g., Baptist Ministers Fellowship, Twin City Ministerial Alliance)
- Submission to local/area Baptist churches
- Placement on media sites such as the church Facebook page
- Word of Mouth

### **Application Package Minimum Required Content**

- Completed Church Standard Pastoral Application
- Cover letter as to why interested in this church
- Letters of Recommendation (3) - clergy, layperson, and personal or professional
- Resume with references
- Copy of license to preach
- Copy of ordination license, if already ordained or statement that candidate is not ordained

### **Post Application Package Receipt**

The PSC shall accept all resumes submitted on time and containing the required minimum content.

The PSC shall timely inform each candidate of the receipt of the application package within two (2) weeks of receipt.

If PSC rejects an application for not being on time or not containing the information requested or for other reason, the candidate shall be timely informed of that rejection.

Candidates to be further considered will be scheduled as follows:

- To serve as pastor of the day at a Sunday Morning Worship Service using the standard church order of service.
- To teach a 30 minute bible study the midweek service night after serving as pastor of the day or soon thereafter if a scheduling conflict.
- To attend a short pastoral candidate meet and greet (no food served if done in sanctuary) with the church body to take place after prayer meeting on the midweek service night after the bible study or on the same midweek service night. If a scheduling conflict exists, another day shall be determined and announced to the church body. In this session the candidate shall introduce himself and his family (if any) to the church body informing the church on whatever he believes is important for the church to know. The church body shall be able to ask the candidate about the pastor of the day sermon and/or about his approach to pastoring a church.
- To meet with PSC to discuss the Pastoral Pre-Call Agreement. PSC shall instruct candidate of the last date the signed agreement must be received and that non-receipt or non-acceptance will result in candidate not being submitted for a vote.

### **Background Checks**

The PSC may optionally require each candidate to submit to a background check. If any candidate is asked to submit to a background check, then all candidates must be required to submit to a background check.

## **SECTION 4 – PASTOR ELECTION**

### **General**

The policies and procedures established herein are intended to protect the integrity of the voting process.

It is reasonable that reasonably active members elect the pastor. Yet, provisions for exceptions are important.

Each Sunday while the pastor search is active, the deacons shall remind the congregation of the importance of attending business meetings and worship services so as to stay informed and observe candidates when they serve as pastor of the day.

The Pastor's election will take place at a meeting called for that purpose. The date and time and purpose of the meeting shall be announced at least during the two consecutive Sunday morning worship services immediately prior to the meeting.

### **Attendance Record**

To preserve the integrity of the voting process based on having reasonable knowledge of the candidates and the pastor search process, only active members of the church should vote.

However, it is recognized that a person becomes active simply by attending a worship service at any time recently even if only the Sunday or midweek service immediately prior to the vote. Therefore, the church depends on the integrity of the person to decide whether he or she qualifies as being an active member and should vote.

Yet, for statistical purposes, the church should keep a sign in record of those attending business meeting during the transition period especially the three (3) months immediately prior to the vote and a count of approximate number of members attending each Sunday during the transition period especially the three (3) months prior to the vote.

### **Absentee Voting**

Absentee voting will be limited to those medically unable to be present, at work, or out of town. If possible, the Chairman of the Deacons should be notified at least one week prior to the vote of the desire to vote in absentee.

### **The Vote**

The election shall take place at a church meeting called for that purpose, of which at least two week's notice to the church body has been given. The notice shall include the possibility of a

second round of voting taking place the following week at the same time and place so members can plan accordingly.

The election shall be by secret ballot and an affirmative vote of **at least three fourths (3/4)** of those voting members present shall be necessary to extend a call to a candidate for pastor.

If no candidate receives at least three fourths (3/4) of those voting members present, a second vote shall take place the following week at the same place and time in which only the top two candidates shall be considered.

If a second election round is required, it shall also be by secret ballot and an affirmative vote of the **majority** of those voting members present shall be necessary to extend a call to a candidate for pastor.

The elected pastor shall be called on the night of the election to inform him of his election. If not reachable he will be informed by text message if possible and called on the following day until he is reached. All other candidates shall be informed by letter within one (1) week of the final vote.

If the elected pastor accepts, the Pastor Search Committee disbands.

If the elected pastor declines, the church shall vote on whether to call the second place candidate. If the second place candidate is rejected then the process shall start all over whereby additional candidates will be sought. Also, candidates will be invited to reapply by submitting a statement to use their existing application package or they may submit an updated application package

If the process is started over, some or all of the Pastor Search Committee may remain on the committee.

The provisions concerning absentee voting shall be in effect to include any needed second round of voting.

## **SECTION 5 – SAMPLE PASTOR SEARCH DOCUMENTS**

### **A. Pastor Search Announcement Sample**

#### **Pastor Search Announcement & Qualifications**

Opening Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Closing Date:

This church, (Church Name), has been in existence for \_\_\_\_\_ years. Currently the active membership is approximately \_\_\_\_\_. The church is prayerfully seeking a full-time **male** pastor who is called by God and equipped to effectively preach and teach the Word of God, and to lead the church in meeting the

spiritual and temporal/natural needs of the church and community. The candidate must be able to fulfill the spiritual needs of the congregation through visitations, prayer, conducting weddings, funerals and administering the ordinances of the church. The candidate must possess the biblical and spiritual qualities as outlined in Acts 6:1-4; Eph 4:11-16; 1 Tim 2:8-15; 1 Tim 3:1-7; 15; and Titus 1:5-8.

### **Other Pastoral Qualifications**

- Be a licensed minister; if not ordained, ordination can be arranged if elected.
- Be a visionary with sound judgment and discernment.
- Have a minimum of five years (preferred) of ministry experience.
- Have attended seminary to some degree (preferred).
- Possess effective communication skills (written and oral).
- Growth oriented and pastoral care capability.
- Demonstrate financial awareness and responsibility.
- Committed to continuing education and development.
- Demonstrate ability to work effectively with a congregation across all ages and genders.
- Possess effective administration skills and able to organize and lead staff.
- Three letters of recommendation (clergy, layperson, and personal or professional).
- Copies of license, ordination, certificates, transcripts or other identification of religious and non-religious educational accomplishments.

### **Application Submission**

The following must be submitted by closing date:

- Completed Pastor Search Application
- Cover letter as to why interested in this church
- Letters of Recommendation (3) - clergy, layperson, and personal or professional
- Resume with references
- Copy of license to preach
- Copy of ordination license, if already ordained or statement that candidate is not ordained

Submit by email to (church email)

Submit by mail to (church address)

We will acknowledge receipt of your application package no later than two (2) weeks after we receive it.

If you have any questions, please contact us by email.

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Chairman, Pastor Search Committee

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Church Clerk

## **B. Letter of Acknowledgement of Receipt of Application**

(Date)

Dear (Name),

We have received your application package for the pastor position at (church name) and it has been made available to the members of our pastor search committee. We appreciate your interest in our church and we assure you that we will give your application our careful consideration.

You may contact us by email at \_\_\_\_\_

Sincerely,

---

Chairman, Pastor Search Committee

---

Church Clerk

## **C. Letter of Decline of Further Consideration Due to Failure to Meet Submission Requirements**

(Date)

Dear (name),

The pastor search committee of (name of church) wants to thank you for the interest and time you have given our committee. After careful discussion of the information contained in your application package, we have decided not to consider you further due to your application not being timely or lacking the following information:

- List information defect

We are deeply grateful for your interest; and we wish you well in your continuing ministry.



Sincerely,

---

Chairman, Pastor Search Committee

---

Church Clerk

#### **D. Letter of Decline of Further Consideration (General)**

(Date)

Dear (name),

The pastor search committee of (name of church) wants to thank you for the interest and time you have given our committee. After careful discussion of the information contained in your application package, we have decided not to consider you further.

While we were impressed with the gifts and skills you bring to the ministry, we do not feel that your strengths fit the needs of our church at this time.

We are deeply grateful for your interest; and we wish you well in your continuing ministry.

Sincerely,

---

Chairman, Pastor Search Committee

---

Church Clerk

#### **E. Invitation to Visit**

(Date)

Dear (name),

The pastor search committee of (name of church) has reviewed your application. We would like to extend to you an opportunity to worship and meet with us as follows:

- To serve as Pastor of the Day on \_\_\_\_\_ at the time of \_\_\_\_\_.
- To teach our congregation a 30 minute bible study on \_\_\_\_\_ at the time of \_\_\_\_\_.
- To have a 30 minute to 1 hour meet and greet with you and your family on \_\_\_\_\_ at the time of \_\_\_\_\_.
- For the pastor search committee to meet with you to discuss the attached Pre-Call Agreement on \_\_\_\_\_ at the time of \_\_\_\_\_.

If these dates and times are not convenient for you, please let us know and we will consider arranging another date and time.

We look forward to you worshipping and meeting with us.

You may contact us by email at \_\_\_\_\_

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman, Pastor Search Committee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Church Clerk

## **F. Pre-Call Agreement**

### **THE CHURCH AND MINISTER PRE-CALL AGREEMENT**

#### **Purpose**

To maximize understanding between the candidate and the church body as to the terms of the call if a minister is elected by the church for the pastor position.

It is understood that this agreement covers the initial commitment of both the minister and the church but after one year of service at the church other terms may be negotiated to the mutual benefit of the parties.

In recognition of the minister's gifts and abilities, this agreement is made by the church with the minister with the understanding that it is only binding if the minister is elected to be the pastor of the church and it is no promise that the minister will be the one elected by the church.

## **THE CHURCH AGREES**

### **1. General**

The pastor, thus elected, shall be called and serve for an indefinite period of time until the relationship is terminated, either by death or his request or the church's request

An elected pastor shall be designated Pastor-Elect until installed which shall take place after a three (3) month probation period.

The minister should expect no benefits other than those listed in this agreement to be provided by this church at this time.

### **2. Compensation**

In awareness of the expected ability of the church to pay as well as the local cost of living, and the experience and education of the minister we are calling, we agree to provide total weekly monetary compensation of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

**3. Advance Pay:** None as payment is made each Sunday after service.

**4. Housing:** The church does not provide a parsonage or housing allowance.

**5. Retirement Benefits:** None or state

**6. Education Allowance:** None or state

**7. Automobile and Travel:** None or state

**8. Relocation/Moving Allowance:** None or state

**9. Healthcare/Medical, Dental, and Disability Insurance:** None or so state

**10. Paid Vacation:** \_\_\_\_\_ weeks after one year of service.

**11. Paid Sick Leave:** \_\_\_\_\_ weeks after one year of service.

### **12. Day/Days Off**

In the interest of his/her well-being and that of his/her family and because ministerial duties require clergy to be on call twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, the church shall permit and encourage the minister to spend two days each week free from ministerial duties. An average weekly service in the range of 50-55 hours is the maximum expectation.

### **13. Attendance at Associations, Districts, and Convention Meetings**

The church considers such attendance advantageous to the pastor of this church and the church. This church considers paying the expenses for such attendance on a case by case basis guided by the financial capacity of the church.

#### **14. Payment of Other Ministers**

The church requires the Pastor to pay the other minister if he requests another minister to preach in his stead during regular Sunday morning services. Exceptions are church approved absences such as conferences, meetings, vacations, sick leave, and one Sunday a month when an associate minister preaches in which case the church will pay the rate to the associate minister as determined by the church. Also, if the church requests another preacher during special morning services then the church will pay the other preacher, for example, if church anniversary is held during regular Sunday morning service.

### **THE MINISTER AGREES**

1. That the provisions set forth above regarding the church policies and commitments are acceptable to the minister.

2. To abide by the following:

The pastor is responsible to exercise faithful leadership in his personal life that flows into faithful leadership in the church. Therefore, he is responsible to put God first, those in his immediate family (if any) second, and the church third as informed by Eph 4:11-16; 1 Tim 2:8-15; 1 Tim 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-8

The pastor is the person primarily responsible for overseeing and carrying out the spiritual mission of the church. Yet he has some responsibility for ensuring the temporal mission of the church is carried out, for example as described in Acts 6:1-7.

The pastor is responsible for ensuring sound biblical doctrine is preached, taught, and practiced on church property.

The pastor is responsible for leading the church, church officers, staff, members, and organizations to function as a New Testament Church so as to accomplish the mission of the church.

The pastor shall work cooperatively with the deacons and other officers and staff of the church.

The pastor shall communicate matters for the deacons attention to the Deacons Chairman or to a meeting with the entirety of the deacons. The pastor must understand the Deacons Chairman has no authority to act without approval of all the deacons except in urgent/emergency situations.

The pastor as the leader of the pastoral ministries of the church shall:

- Lead the church to engage in worship, fellowship, education, witness, evangelism, and other ministry.
- Be primarily responsible to proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers.

- Work with, train, develop, and support associate ministers of the church
- Be in regular attendance of prayer meetings and bible study.
- Care for the church's members and other persons in the community.
- Visits and ministers to the homebound, sick, and bereaved members of the church
- Participates in funerals and weddings involving members of this church
- Participates in fellowships, districts, and conventions
- Supports ministries of the church
- Devises strategies to motivate and encourage growth of members and membership
- Should consider continuing to further progress in study in the Word of God by an outside source (college, seminary or theology school).

3. To abide by the provisions in the church Constitution and Bylaws, a copy of which is attached or if the Constitution and/or Bylaws need improvements/changes then the minister agrees that the minister will show the church leadership and church body through Bible Study that such improvements/changes do not violate scripture and are advantageous to the church.

4. To sign and return this agreement back to the church indicating acceptance or not no later than \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson of Pastor Search Committee

Date\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Church Clerk

Date\_\_\_\_\_

I accept (Mark one): \_\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_\_No

\_\_\_\_\_  
Minister's Printed Name

Date\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Minister's Signature)

## **G. Samples Pastor Search Documents (PDF Version of Above Documents)**

[Pastor Search Announcement](#)

[Pastor Search Application](#)

[Letters](#)

[Pre-Call Agreement](#)

## **SECTION 6 – REFERENCES ON PASTOR SEARCH PROCESS**

Below are some example references available on the Internet. Of course, I and others will not necessarily agree with or find everything useful in them. They just offer some insight into how others go about the process. Of course, there are other references also available on the Internet and elsewhere.

[National Baptist Convention USA Pastor Search Guidelines](#)

[Tennessee Baptist Mission Board Pastor Search Guide](#)

[Baptist General Convention of Texas Pastor Search Committee Workbook](#)

[Southern Baptist of Texas Pastor Search Handbook](#)

[National Association of Congregational Christian Churches – A Handbook for Pastor Search Committees](#)

## **ARTICLE VII: CHURCH ORDINANCES**

### **SECTION 1 - BAPTISM**

This church shall receive for baptism any person who has received Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith, who professes Him publicly at any worship service, and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord.

Baptism shall be by immersion in water.

Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service of the church.

Baptism shall be administered by the pastor or whomever the church shall authorize.

A person who professes Christ shall be baptized as soon as possible.

### **SECTION 2 - THE LORD'S SUPPER**

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church and other Christians, through partaking of bread and fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ who died for our sins.

The church shall observe the Lord's Supper at least twice a year.

The pastor and deacons shall be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper.

## **ARTICLE VIII: CHURCH MEETINGS**

### **SECTION 1 - WORSHIP SERVICES**

The church shall meet regularly on Sunday mornings for regular worship and open to all members of the church body and to all members of the community and beyond.

The pastor or his designee shall lead the worship services.

Upon vacancy of the pastor office, the deacons shall supply a pastor of the day to lead the worship services in coordination with the deacons.

## **SECTION 2 - SPECIAL SERVICES**

Revival services and any other meetings which will be essential in the promotion of the objectives of the church shall be placed on the church calendar as desired.

## **SECTION 3 - REGULAR AND SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS**

Every business meeting should begin with a prayer and scripture to seek the Lord's blessing, wisdom, and guidance in the conduct of the Lord's business.

The pastor or his designated pulpit minister shall chair the meeting.

If the pastor office is vacant, the Deacon Chairman or another deacon shall chair the meeting.

Regular business meetings shall be held monthly at the same calendar period and clock time

Special business meetings may be called and held to consider special matters of significant nature. A two-week notice to the church must be given concerning the subject, date, time, and location unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical or unless otherwise specified by these By-laws.

In all business meetings, the quorum shall consist of those voting members present who attend, provided it is a regular business meeting or a properly called special business meeting unless otherwise specified in these By-Laws.

An agenda may be published and distributed to the membership prior to each business meeting.

Robert's Rules of Order shall be recognized as the general pattern for the conduct of the business meetings.

## **ARTICLE IX: CHURCH FINANCES**

### **SECTION 1 - BUDGET**

The finance secretary and appropriate auxiliary heads shall annually prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by item the amount needed for expenses.

## **SECTION 2 - FISCAL YEAR**

The church fiscal year shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31 of each year.

## **ARTICLE X: RESOLUTIONS CONCERNING CHURCH and SOCIETAL CONTROVERSIES**

### **Pulpit Ministers**

Scriptural Basis: 1 Tim 2:8-15; 1 Tim 3:1-7, 8-13, 15; Titus 1:5-8; 1 Cor 11:1-16; Eph 5:2-33; 1 Peter 3:1-7

Definition of the word minister. The word minister means to serve. Therefore, the word minister and related words such as ministry may by convention and practice be applied to different types and levels of service; this includes the service of females with limitations.

The pulpit is for those ministers who are set apart to publicly preach and exercise or potentially exercise spiritual authority at the congregation/assembly level; it is not for everyone who ministers. Note that a preacher is a speaker but not every speaker is a preacher. We are all called to preach but not all are called preachers.

The church holds that in the beginning God created male and female and distinguished between them with respect to role. Accordingly, the church holds that when the bible says there is no male or female (Galatians 3:28) it speaks of God making no difference with respect to salvation; however, God still makes a difference with respect to roles. Indeed, Paul the writer of Galatians 3:28 elsewhere clearly distinguishes between the roles of males and females.

The church holds that God has ordained the home and the church to be led by men in those areas and organizational elements whose primary focus is preaching and teaching of what thus saith the Lord God; this is herein called the biblical male headship principle. This does not include societal functions such as operating business or nonprofits not focused on preaching and teaching what thus saith the Lord God.

The church holds that the pulpit is a place for male ministers due to the biblical male headship principle regarding spiritual leadership. These male ministers are:

- Bishops, pastors, elders
- Associate ministers who are being trained, developed, and prepared to serve as bishop at some church so as to be ready when and if the desire and call comes from God and some church. Since females are not biblically allowed to be congregation level bishops, pastors, or elders, no sch training, development, and preparation is appropriate.



This church holds that the pulpit is restricted to male ministers who are licensed to preach or preaching his first sermon for licensing. To protect both the pulpit, church, and person, a person who has announced his calling shall be assessed and prepared by the pastoral staff outside the pulpit for licensing.

The church holds that females are not to occupy the pulpit; this includes those who are licensed to minister in some capacity. The church takes this position for the following reasons:

- so as to minimize the opportunity and probability of a female believing it is proper for her to rise to the level of bishop, pastor, and/or elder;
- so as to minimize the opportunity and probability of other pulpit ministers and persons in the pew believing and encouraging women to believe it is proper for a woman to rise to the level of bishop, pastor, and/or elder.

It is recognized that some churches allow females to fully occupy the pulpit. Accordingly, visiting females may enter the pulpit seating perhaps unaware of this church's policy. In such a case, the female shall not be asked to leave. Church officials later may inform the female of the church policy so hopefully she will respect it the next time. All policies regarding such females shall still apply even if she enters the pulpit seating. Each person in the assembly shall handle the matter as best to maintain personal integrity with respect to biblical principles. Some may if desired refer to men present in the pulpit using the title of address brother and the females present as sister to promote unity in the midst of the assembly instead of perceived conflict. Always be mindful there is a time to deal with all matters but not every time is the right time.

### **Women Servants in Ministry**

Definition of Ministry. The word ministry refers to an activity involving serving God and other. It may by convention and practice be applied to different types and levels of service; this includes the service of females with limitations.

Definition of the word preacher. A preacher is a person authorized as an official representative of the church (Matthew 16) to herald the word of God in the public square/area. Only males are so authorized. Therefore, women should not be referred to as preachers. Note that in the Bible there is no female identified as a preacher. Not even the prophetess Deborah for she did not herald the word of God in the public arena. She answered people questions who came up to her but that is judging not preaching.

Definition of the word minister. The word minister means to serve such that the same Greek word in the KJV is variously translated servant and minister depending on context. Indeed in the case of Phoebe (Romans 16:1-2) the translation is properly servant since the specifics of her ministry is not given; there Paul does indicate that she did great work in helping him and others in times of need such as when suffering or in distress such as financial distress/business as indicated by his use of the word translated succourer. The word servant by convention should be applied to female instead of the word minister **except** in the case of a prophetess. Prophetess is a special case indicating a high level of ministry. The word servant and minister by convention may be applied to males such that use of the word minister is indicative of a higher level of

assembly service.

As set forth under the section entitled Pulpit Ministers, the church holds that females are not to occupy the pulpit; this includes those who are licensed or otherwise formally certified to serve in some capacity. The church holds that females are not to perform the pulpit function whether or not a separate set aside physical pulpit area exists or not. This includes that even from the floor a female is not to perform a function generally accepted to be performed by the pulpit.

All female ministry activities shall be done in a way that does not project the woman in attitude, action, or position as having spiritual authority over men as set forth by scriptures such as 1 Tim 2:11-15 and 1 Cor 11:1-16.

Women may speak/preach prophetically in the midst of the regular worship assembly (1 Cor 11:5); this includes but is not limited to a prophetess. However, as aforementioned such women are not called preachers because by convention the term preacher is usually applied to one who is set apart to regularly preach publicly in contrast to privately or to occasionally speak in the midst of the congregation.

Women speakers other than prophecy should take place outside of the regular (morning, afternoon, evening worship) services such as in a special afternoon/evening women and/or children focused missionary service; men may attend such services with the understanding that the woman speaker focus is the women and children. However, occasional speech as speakers not preachers may take place during regular (morning, afternoon, evening worship) services. Any such speaking during regular morning/evening worship services shall be limited to no more than once a month. It may take place in addition to or in place of the pulpit message of the day. The pulpit minister may insert gospel message information as appropriate and give the Invitation to Christian Discipleship/Prayer before or after the woman speaker has finished.

Women may be licensed to minister with limitations. The licensing shall authorize such women to lead other women in spiritual ministry; it shall not authorized women to lead men in spiritual ministry in any manner that indicates the woman has spiritual including preaching/teaching authority over a man. The licensing shall authorize such women to regularly speak before an assembly of women in a service such as an afternoon women and/or children focused service established for that specific purpose. They may also occasionally speak before a mixed assembly of males and females as established below.

Women licensed in ministry should be designated as Certified Lay Servant or Certified Lay Speaker or Certified Lay Teacher.

Women should not be ordained as ordination confers the authorization to have an independent ministry. However, some churches have ordained women; in such cases the ordination shall be considered the same as licensed with respect to the work of the church.

Women shall always conduct themselves in a manner that does not project in attitude or action or position as having spiritual authority over men.

Outside of the church assembly women may communicate/report scriptures and practice the application of godly principles to everyday life at home, at work, at play, and at leisure within the constraints of biblical order. They are not to do so as performing as a member of the pulpit or as performing at the level of a pulpit function such as public pulpit preaching and teaching.

Titles of address such as Sister, Ms., or Mrs. or educational title such as Dr. should be used for women who speak including for those licensed or otherwise certified. If she is a deaconess, the title of address Deaconess may be employed. If a Certified Lay Servant, Certified Lay Speaker or Certified Lay Teacher that title of address may be employed. Alternatively, first or whole names may be used as is the case for men as that is the biblical norm.

Women speakers should give regular attention to the provisions of Titus 2:3-4; 2 Tim 1:5; 2 Tim 3:15 with respect to other women and to children. However, it is expected that their presentation would briefly include the gospel especially its salvation and holiness message and that is great.

In biblical days where there were house churches it is not clear whether there were designated set aside pulpit areas/platform generally considered the place of spiritual authority.

In modern churches, the designated set aside pulpit area/platform whether raised or unraised is generally considered the place of spiritual authority in the assembly. So then in modern days the pulpit serves at least somewhat to satisfy the head covering symbolism of 1 Cor 11.

Generally, those speaking from the floor outside of the designated pulpit area/platform are not considered to be speaking from a position of spiritual authority unless they represent some specific office exemplified in Ephesians 4:11.

So then women and men speaking from the floor may use the same movable lectern when speaking.

In those **extremely rare** occasions where speaking **from the pulpit** is necessary to be sufficiently heard by those the furthest from the speaker, the female speaker may walk to the pulpit at the time to speak but not sit in the pulpit and return from the pulpit after speaking. A movable pulpit podium lectern **separate from** the regular pulpit podium should be positioned at the side of the pulpit platform for use by the female speaker in such a case.

## **Receipt and Baptism of the Holy Spirit and Speaking in Tongues**

This resolution shall cover these matters at a very high level. A bible study is needed to provide adequate coverage.

First let me establish that this topic is not about water baptism when using the term baptism as water baptism is a separate though related topic.

The Bible speaks of a receipt of the Holy Spirit (e.g., John 20:22) and a Baptism of the Holy Spirit (e.g., Matt 3:11; Acts 1:5, 8; 1 Cor 12:13). Baptism of the Holy Spirit seemingly biblically includes receipt of the Holy Spirit but is certainly more than just receipt of the Holy Spirit.

Receipt of the Holy Spirit is indicated in John 20:22 which occurred before the day of Pentecost.

An instance of Baptism of the Holy Spirit occurred on the day of Pentecost as set forth in Acts 2 which occurred after the event of John 20:22.

Receipt of the Holy Spirit has to do with the Holy Spirit dwelling within the believer.

There are many facets to Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Here I only deal with the gifts the Holy Spirit gives the believer according to God's specific calling and purpose for that believer. Along with the gift comes the power to exercise the gift as God so wills.

Speaking in tongues is one of the many gifts God gives to believers such that not all believers receive the same gift(s) or measure of gift(s). Like other gifts, not all believers receive the gift of speaking in tongues. Therefore, speaking in tongues is not evidence of a person being more holy than or more valuable than one who does not speak in tongues.

Since believers receive different gifts it follows that baptism of the Holy Spirit differs across believers but no believer can claim any superiority as to such difference in baptism of the Holy Spirit.

1 Cor 12 is instructive as to the biblical concept of Baptism of the Holy Spirit in general and specifically with respect to gift(s).

1 Cor 12:13 says the one Holy Spirit has baptized all believers into the one body of Christ (the church) and made to drink of that one Spirit. In so doing we are put in union with Christ and all other believers. Ephesians 4:1-6 speak of this unity and oneness brought through this baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 6:3-6 and Colossians 2:12 speak of the believer being baptized into the death of Christ and his resurrection.

1 Cor 14 is instructive as to speaking in tongues. It speaks of two types of such speech: (1) speech understandable with or without an interpreter and (2) speech not understandable by the hearer.

The former is right to do in the assembly of believers and is the type that occurred in Acts 2.

The latter which the KJV calls unknown tongues should be done either in private such as at home or quietly so that no one hears anything said. It is not the type of tongues that occurred in Acts 2.

1 Cor 14 establishes the Acts 2 kind of tongues in which the hearer understood what was being said. It also establishes a second kind of tongues in which the hearer does not understand what is being said unless there is a human interpreter. The KJV inserts the italicized word unknown to indicate this second kind of tongues though no corresponding Greek word appears in the original manuscript. Yet the context indicates the difference between known and “unknown” speech where the words known and unknown have to do with understandability of the speech.

1 Cor 14 establishes that the second kind of tongues should not occur in a public worship assembly to the extent that anyone other than the person and God hears speech. This is made abundantly clear when one combines the teaching/principles of 1 Cor 14:14, 1 Cor 14:20, and 1 Cor 14:28. The message is be adults not children; be not in malice in behavior.

Yet, in the absence of severe confusion it is reasonable that the congregation gives people time to grow up just as we don’t kick children out the house because they have not learned to speak well yet. We rather give them time to more naturally mature. So in the absence of severe observable disruption we give fellow believers time to spiritually mature.

With regards to “speaking in tongues”, consider the following key scriptures from 1 Cor 14:

1 Cor 14:(14) For if I pray in an unknown tongue, **MY** spirit [**not** the Holy Spirit] prayeth, but **MY** understanding is unfruitful...(20) Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men...(28) But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God [**means no one else hears you**].

The biblical principle that a little leaven leavens the whole lump is a warning from God that we should always be mindful of.

The leadership should watch and teach so that “speaking in tongues” does not reach a point of being distracting or disruptive.

## **Religious Liberty**

This church holds that religious liberty is a gift from God. This church supports the freedom of the individual conscience to embrace biblical truth with compromise and to choose to worship God according to the dictates of one’s heart.

This church supports the First Amendment to the US Constitution and like minded State Constitutions with respect to freedom of religion for all Americans even as we press to make all a disciple of Jesus Christ as commanded in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 1:8).

## **Marriage**

Marriage is a biblical institution established by God as described by Scripture.

We believe the biblical ideal for marriage is the uniting of male and female in covenant commitment.

This church's pastors and staff will not officiate in same-sex unions or same-sex marriages, nor will its property or resources be used for such purposes.

Anyone including those who openly engage in homosexual related attitudes and activities may join and otherwise be a member of this church with the understanding that this church will as needed preach against and rebuke such attitude and behavior especially to protect children from spiritual and temporal corruption. Such individuals shall not be authorized to be an officer or work with children in this church. Such persons shall not be authorized to openly promote such attitude and behavior in this church services and/or on this church property.

## **Dress and Other Appearance Factors**

Clothing differs and changes across cultures and time. Yet, there are foundational biblical principles that every culture and every generation should follow.

Male and female clothing are similar and some aspects yet there are aspects of them that are distinctive in the sense that male dress is distinguishable from female dress. For example, in buttons on an upper piece of clothing are on different sides for male and female.

Deuteronomy 22:5 speaks against cross-dressing. This is supported by Romans 1 and is therefore binding today.

Leviticus 19:19 and Deuteronomy 22:11 speaks against clothing made of mixing wool with linen and perhaps of mixing any types. The reason for this is unknown. Some say it was for health and safety reasons. Some says the high priest wore garments of a mixture of wool and linen so the prohibition was for everyone else to distinguish the high priest. In any case, it was a custom not a moral law and is not binding today.

Numbers 15:37-40 and Deuteronomy 22:12 requires fringes on clothing. As Numbers says the fringes served as a reminder primarily to the WEARER to obey the commandments of God. Of course, secondarily it reminder all who saw one wearing such. Fringes were like tassels on the four bottom/hem corners or all around of one's outer upper garment such as a shirt or blouse. It was cultural in that it was specific to the type of clothing that existed in that day. Perhaps in the spirit of the commandment reminder primary to the wearer persons could wear something that serves a similar purpose.

The principle of modesty is a foundational principle regarding clothing and other appearance factors such as those described in 1 Peter 3:3 and 1 Tim 2:9. Note that these scriptures in 1 Peter 3 and 1 Tim 2 do not forbid wearing of gold or braiding of hair for if they did they would forbid putting on clothing at all since Peter uses the phrase "putting on of

apparel”. Instead, the spirit of both Peter and Paul is to forbid excess in such things. For if gold was forbidden then gold watches and rings would be forbidden.

Head covering mentioned in 1 Cor 11 is a cultural custom no longer required. It pointed to the biblical male headship principle similar to the tassels or fringes. The male headship principle is still applicable; therefore, other symbolisms that serve the function are appropriate when available. For example, forbidding women to serve as a pulpit minister serves as symbolism that points to the male headship principle.

#### References:

1. [What Does the Bible Say About Proper Dress? \(christianbiblereference.org\)](http://christianbiblereference.org)
2. [Why does the Bible speak against wearing clothing made of different types of fabric? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)
3. [Mixed Fabrics: Does Leviticus 19:19 and Deuteronomy 22:11 condemn wearing mixed fabrics? | United Church of God \(ucg.org\)](http://ucg.org)
4. [What's So Wrong with Mixing Wool & Linen? - Our Rabbi Jesus](#)

#### Other Resolutions

Other resolutions may be published in a separate document.

### ARTICLE XI: DISSOLUTION

Upon discontinuance of this Church by dissolution or otherwise, any assets lawfully available for distribution are to be transferred to one or more organizations qualifying as an exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended, by a majority of members attending at a duly called business meeting.

### ARTICLE XII: AMENDMENTS

#### SECTION 1

The Constitution and these Bylaws may be amended, modified, or repealed only by two thirds (2/3) vote of the voting members present at any duly convened business meeting of the church, provided the proposed amendment shall have been presented to the church in writing at any regular or duly called business meeting of the church at least thirty (30) days prior to the date established for voting on said amendment.

When an amendment is proposed and has been rejected by the church, that amendment, or any amendment embodying the substance thereof, shall not be proposed again for at least six months from the date of the rejection of such amendment.

#### SECTION 2

Any amendments to the Constitution or Bylaws shall immediately go into full force and effect from and after their adoption.

### **ARTICLE XIII: RATIFICATION**

This constitution and by-laws shall supersede any and all former constitutions and by-laws of this church.

Agreed and accepted on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Church Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman of Deacons

\_\_\_\_\_  
Pastor