

**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
OF THE
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
GUNTERSVILLE, ALABAMA**

THE CONSTITUTION

Preamble

For the more certain preservation and security of the principles of our faith and to the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the accepted tenets of the Southern Baptist Denomination, and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body with respect to its relation to other churches of the same faith, we do declare and establish this constitution.

I. Name

This body shall be known as the First Baptist Church of Guntersville, Incorporated, Guntersville, Alabama.

Mission Statement: “Our mission is to know Christ and to make Him known!”

Vision Statement: “Our Vision is to celebrate life in Jesus Christ through worship, praise, fellowship, and to equip the saints so that in His name, we offer the assurance of salvation to our community, our nation, and our world.”

II. Objectives

To be a dynamic spiritual organism empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible in our church, community, and throughout the world.

To be a worshiping fellowship, experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing His person, and responding in obedience to His leadership.

To experience an increasingly meaningful fellowship with God and fellow believers.

To help people experience a growing knowledge of God and man.

To be a church which ministers unselfishly to persons in the community and the world in Jesus' name.

To evangelize the lost, equip the saved for more fruitful ministry, and to exalt the Savior through worship and service.

To be a church whose purpose is to be Christ-like in our daily living by emphasizing total commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the lordship of Christ.

III. Statement of Basic Beliefs

We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired word of God and the basis for our beliefs. This church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of **“The Baptist Faith and Message”** as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963. We voluntarily band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost persons. The ordinances of the church are believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper. (See Article VI of the Bylaws.)

IV. Church Covenant

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

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

We also engage to maintain family and secret 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, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale of and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to use our influence to combat the abuse of drugs and the spread of pornography; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

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

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

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 the membership. (See Article I of the Bylaws.)

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

This church is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation, which are common among Baptist churches. Insofar as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the Association, the State Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

BYLAWS

I. Church Membership

Section 1. General

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

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

Section 2. Candidacy

Any person may offer himself/herself 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 according to the policies of this church. (See Article VI of the Bylaws.)

(2) By promise of a letter of recommendation from another Missionary Baptist church.

(3) By statement of prior conversion experience and baptism by immersion.

Should there be any dissent as to any candidate(s), such dissent shall be referred to the pastor and chairman of deacons for investigation and the making of a recommendation to the church within thirty (30) days. A majority vote of those church members present and voting shall be required to elect such candidate(s) to membership.

Section 3. New Member Orientation

New members of this church are expected to participate in the church's new member orientation.

Section 4. Rights of Members

- Every member of the church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference, provided the member is present.

- Every member of the church is eligible for consideration by the membership as candidates for elective offices/committee membership in the church, except for the office of deacon.

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

Section 5. Termination of Membership

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

- Death of the member.
- Dismissal to another Baptist church.
- Exclusion by action of this church.
- Erasure upon request or proof of membership in a church of another denomination.
- Request by member.

Section 6. Discipline

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

Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, the pastor and the deacons will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accordance with Matthew 18. If it becomes necessary for the church to take action to exclude a member, a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting is required; and the church may proceed to declare the person to be no longer in the membership of the church. A spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance shall pervade all such proceedings.

The church may restore to membership any person previously excluded upon request of the excluded person and by a majority vote of the church upon evidence of the excluded person's repentance and reformation.

II. CHURCH OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

All who serve as officers and committee members shall be active and resident members of this church.

Those persons elected as officers and committee members are expected to be dedicated Christians who will perform their duties faithfully and in a Christian manner.

Section I. Church Officers

The officers of this church shall be the Pastor; Associate Pastor; Minister of Music; Minister of Education; Minister of Students; Chairman of Deacons; Clerk; Treasurer; Trustees; Brotherhood Director and Director Women's Ministries Leadership Team.

PAID PERSONNEL

(1) The Pastor

The pastor is the spiritual leader of the congregation and, as such, it becomes his responsibility to preach the message that God leads him to deliver, to call upon those seeking spiritual help, to visit the sick and distressed, and to minister to needs in the church as he is aware of them. He is to be considered an Ex-Officio member of all committees and his leadership is to be recognized by all concerned.

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

For the purpose of selecting a prospective pastor, a Pulpit Search Committee shall be appointed by the Committee on Committees. After election by the church, the Pulpit Search Committee will seek out a suitable prospect and make their recommendation to the deacons. The deacons will review the qualifications of the prospective pastor and upon approval of three-fourths (3/4) of the deacons present and voting, the prospect shall be brought before the church membership by the

Pulpit Search Committee for a sermon(s). His election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose after at least a one-week public notice has been given. The election will be at the Sunday morning service. Election shall be by ballot, and an affirmative vote of at least three-fourths (3/4) of the church members present and voting will be necessary to elect a pastor.

His call to the pastorate shall be for an indefinite period of time. It can be terminated by the acceptance of his resignation (with a two-week notice) by the Church, or by a majority vote of the members present and voting at a meeting called for that purpose. A vote of dismissal shall be by ballot. A meeting for this purpose may be called upon the recommendation of a majority of the deacons, or at least fifty (50) resident church members. A public notice of at least a one-week must be given prior to the meeting.

The pulpit of the church shall be under the pastor's personal supervision and control during his tenure in office. He shall have the privilege of selecting the evangelists for special revival services and other ministers who may preach on stated occasions.

The pastor may direct or supervise the performance of the Church Cleaning Contract. His activities in this area should be coordinated with the House and Grounds Committee. All paid staff members are under the leadership/supervision of the pastor.

The pastor will make an annual written evaluation of job performance for all paid staff members except the pianist, organist, and part-time nursery and secretarial help. This evaluation will be discussed with the employee and the Personnel Committee. Evaluations shall be maintained in a confidential file.

(2) **The Associate Pastor**

The Associate Pastor shall assist the pastor in providing spiritual leadership to the congregation, in areas of outreach and evangelism, visitation ministry, prospects, and fill the pulpit as required.

He will serve as minister of senior adults. This includes coordinating, developing, and implementing various ministries for them.

He provides mission education and awareness to the entire congregation.

The Associate Pastor may be called or dismissed by the church upon the recommendation of the Personnel Committee with the concurrence of the Deacon Council. Other procedures for electing/dismissing are the same as for the pastor.

(3) **The Minister of Music**

The Minister of Music shall be charged with the responsibility of providing worshipful music for all services and departments of the church, and shall have general oversight and direction of the church music program. He/she is also responsible for directing the choir or choirs in practice and in public singing, and is to cooperate with the pastor and other leaders in the selection of suitable music and the decision as to appropriate musical programs for all occasions where such services are needed.

He/she shall work very closely, at all times, with the pastor.

The purchase of any equipment relative to the music program must be coordinated with the Minister of Music. The Minister of Music shall serve as an Ex-Officio member of the Audio-Visual Committee, Music Committee, and Wedding Committee.

The employment or dismissal is the same as for the Associate Pastor.

(4) **The Minister of Education**

The Minister of Education is in charge of and responsible for all church education, and shall promote this through the department heads, workers, committees, and others who are engaged in leadership activities where his/her work should be expressed. He/she is responsible for coordination of the activity schedule on the church calendar. Coordination will be accomplished with all affected church organizations.

He/she shall work very closely, at all times, with the pastor.

The Minister of Education shall serve as an Ex-Officio member of the Benevolence Committee and Nominating Committee.

The employment or dismissal is the same as for the Associate Pastor.

(5) **The Minister of Students**

The Minister of Students is responsible for providing activities or programs for youth, other than those in Sunday School, Discipleship Training, etc.

He/she is to put special emphasis on encouraging the youth to participate and attend church services and church-sponsored activities. The Minister of Students' duties shall also include the development of activities and programs that will provide spiritual, mental, and physical growth.

He/she shall work under the leadership and guidance of the pastor and in close cooperation with all church leaders and staff members.

The Minister of Students shall serve as an Ex-Officio member of the Youth Committee.

The employment or dismissal is the same as for the Associate Pastor.

(6) **The Director of Children's Ministry**

The Director of Children's Ministry is responsible for planning, developing, promoting and coordinating a comprehensive children's ministry (Birth thru 5th grade). This will include Sunday School, children's church, discipleship training, Wednesday night activities, summer and seasonal events, and Vacation Bible School.

He/She shall work under the leadership and guidance of the pastor and in close cooperation with all church leaders and staff members.

The Director of Children's Ministry shall serve as an Ex-Officio member of the Children's Committee.

The employment or dismissal is the same as for the Associate Pastor.

(7) **The Church Secretary**

The Church Secretary shall have supervision of the church office, assist the clerk with the church roll and records, assist the treasurer with banking and bookkeeping of financial records, and assist the pastor with correspondence and preparation of any other documents needed. The secretary is responsible for ordering and maintaining church administrative supplies. He/she shall help with the general promotion of the various organizations of the church insofar as practical.

He/she shall be under the supervision of the pastor. In the absence of the pastor, he/she shall be under the supervision of the Associate Pastor, Minister of Music, Minister of Students, in that order. The secretary may be hired or dismissed by the church upon the recommendation of the Personnel Committee and the Deacon Council.

(8) **Other Non-Ministerial Paid Church Personnel**

The employment and/or dismissal of maids, nursery help, additional office personnel, organist, pianist, etc., shall be the responsibility of the Personnel Committee in consultation with the appropriate committee or staff officer. Church approval of salary, benefits, etc., and employment/dismissal is required.

Procedure for his/her employment or dismissal is the same as for the secretary.

NON-PAID PERSONNEL

(1) **Deacons**

The church shall have a Deacon Council made up of eighteen (18) elected deacons.

Men shall serve on the Active Deacons Council according to the rotation system, herein set forth:

- The tenure of office for each deacon shall be three (3) years on the active body.

- The terms of office for each deacon shall be staggered so that one-third (1/3) of the active deacons rotate off and are replaced each year on September first.

- A man may not be considered for reelection at the conclusion of an active term until one year has elapsed.

The qualifications for deacons shall be those scriptures set forth in Acts 6:3-5 and I Timothy 3:8-13.

In addition, this church establishes the following standards for deacons:

- Must be a male member of the First Baptist Church and at least twenty-one (21) years old by September first.

- Must have been a member of the First Baptist Church one year by September first.

- There should be a demonstrated love for – and a commitment to – the total ministry and programs of the First Baptist Church.

- A deacon should have a spirit of full cooperation with the pastor and other church leadership in presenting and executing a spiritual program to meet the needs of the church/community.

- Last, but not least, a deacon must be sure of his salvation.

The method of nomination and selection is:

- The Chairman of the Deacons will make known in the May meeting of deacons that it is time to prepare for the next year's election of deacons.

- Each Church Member may nominate no more than two individuals to serve as a Deacon. These nominations shall be turned into the church office not later than May 15th. The Chairman of Deacons and Pastor will review each nomination for qualification and contact each nominee as to their willingness to serve prior to the June scheduled Deacon's Meeting. If the Active Deacon Council determines that the nominated individuals do not reflect a good representation of eligible men they shall nominate additional candidates to insure that a minimum of twenty (20) names will appear on the ballot. Any additional nominees shall be reviewed for qualifications and willingness to serve prior to mailing out ballots.

- During the last week in June, a ballot and list of eligible church members will be mailed to each church member with adequate number of spaces to fill the vacancies because of rotation or other causes.

- Ballots will be turned in at the Sunday morning church service (Sunday School or Worship Service) on the second Sunday in July. Absentee ballots are not permitted. Members must be present at the church on the morning that ballots are cast in order for their vote to count. Extra ballots will be available for those who forget to bring theirs. A ballot marked for more than the number of announced vacancies will be void.

- Ballots shall be collected and counted by the chairman of the deacons and the six deacons rotating off the active deacon's council. These ballots and tabulations shall be kept on file for one year.

- The pastor and/or chairman of deacons will contact the deacons receiving the most votes. If a candidate refuses to accept, the man receiving the next highest number of votes will be asked. If there is a tie, a name will be drawn to determine the winner. When an elected deacon declines to serve, he shall not be considered again to fill any deacon vacancy for the current year. After the acceptance, the names of elected deacons shall be published in the Church Bulletin. Ordination shall be made as needed before September first.

- Any vacancies occurring before June first shall be filled in this manner: The pastor and chairman of deacons will contact the next highest man from the original election ballot. If the highest man does not accept, they will proceed down the list until an acceptance is made. After acceptance, this person will become a member of the Active Deacons Council. Vacancies that occur after June first will be filled at the regular election of deacons. A deacon filling a partial term will be eligible for reelection to a full three year term without waiting one year.

- There shall be no obligation to constitute as an assigned deacon one who has been a deacon in another church; but in such instances as one might be chosen by this church for assignment as a deacon, his previous ordination by another church of like faith and order shall suffice for this church.

- Any person who has served as a deacon may request or be nominated to serve as Deacon Emeritus subject to approval by the church. A Deacon Emeritus is an honorary position, with all the rights and privileges of an active deacon except that of voting in meetings of the deacons.

Deacons' Service and Organization

In accordance with the meaning of the Word and practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. They are to

be zealous to guard the unity of the spirit within the church in the bonds of peace. They shall serve as council of advice with the pastor and other ministerial staff members in matters pertaining to the welfare and ongoing of the church programs.

The Deacons Council shall meet regularly once a month (time and place to be determined by the Deacon Council), and more often if necessary to attend to matters coming before it. The Council may apportion the membership of the church among its members in order to minister more effectively. For a regular meeting of the deacons where only general matters of business are to be transacted, one-third (1/3) of the active deacons may transact such business. For matters such as the calling of a pastor, personnel changes, etc., two-thirds (2/3) of the deacons shall constitute a quorum. No called meeting shall be held unless all the deacons are notified by telephone, in person, or by letter, unless said meeting shall have been announced at a Sunday morning service previous to call.

The Deacons Council shall determine the qualification and method of obtaining its own officers, committees, etc. Also, they may decide the number and kind of officers needed. However, for selection of the chairman, vice chairman, and secretary, the chairman of deacons shall appoint a committee of three deacons. This committee shall be made up of a deacon from each group, including the newly elected deacons group. The committee shall seek out and recommend to the Deacons Council their selection for next year's officers. In the event of the death or resignation of the chairman, the vice chairman shall serve the remainder of the term. A two-thirds (2/3) majority of the deacons present and voting at a regular or called meeting of the Deacons Council is necessary to elect an officer(s) of the Deacon Council. Deacons Council committee members may be elected by majority vote or appointed by the chairman as the Deacons Council so desires.

(2) **The Moderator**

The Moderator shall be appointed by the Active Deacon Council. In the absence of the moderator, the chairman of deacons shall preside; or in the absence of both, the pastor followed by the associate pastor. In the absence of all the aforementioned, the clerk will call the church to order and a moderator shall be elected.

(3) **Church Clerk**

The church shall elect a Clerk annually. The term of office shall begin September first. He/she shall keep records of all official church actions except as otherwise provided. It will be the responsibility of him/her to keep a register of the church members with date of acceptance, dismissal, transfer, or death, together with a record of baptisms and date thereof. He/she shall issue letters of request of membership, transfer from churches of faith, and letters of dismissal as requests are received. He/she shall give legal notice of all meetings where such notice is necessary.

(4) **Church Treasurer**

The church shall elect a Treasurer annually. It shall be the duty of him/her to receive, preserve, and supervise the disbursement of all money from the church treasury. He/she shall keep, at all times, an itemized account of receipts and disbursements. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to render to the church at each regular monthly meeting an itemized report of the preceding month's transactions. At the end of each fiscal year, he/she shall render to the church an annual report showing the total amount of receipts, and an itemized statement of expenditures by budget line. All books, records, and accounts kept by him/her shall be considered the property of the church. The books/records shall be open to inspection at all times by any member of the church except the records of gifts by the members or non-members. The Treasurer shall be an Ex-Officio member of the Budget and Finance Committee. An Associate Treasurer may be nominated for the purpose of assisting the Treasurer.

(5) **Librarian**

The church shall elect a Librarian(s) and a sufficient number of Associate Librarians annually. Their function is to maintain the Church Library in an efficient and effective manner, to encourage its use, and supervise the library services provided for various church organizations.

(6) **Ushers**

The church shall elect a Day and Night Group Chairman of Ushers and a sufficient number of ushers as required. Their duties will include the greeting and seating of worshipers, the collection of church offerings, sanctuary control of temperature and lights to provide a

comfortable facility, and promote an atmosphere of reverence within the auditorium. This may include the handling of disturbances during the worship services.

(7) **Trustees**

The Trustees shall be at least three (3) in number. The Trustees shall be responsible for the following:

- Execute deeds, deeds of trust, mortgages, promissory notes, or other pecuniary actions by direction of the church.

- Administer trusts and gifts (other than cash) coming to the church by bequest or donation.

- Secure the proper legal protection of all property of the church and see that all legal documents are stored in a safety deposit box, making periodic inventories and reports of these contents.

- Perform other duties as required by the church. Church approval is necessary for the Trustees to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property.

(8) **Lord's Supper Coordinators**

The Lord's Supper Coordinators prepare the elements and the equipment for the observance of the Lord's Supper. They help to make the memorial services an expression of true worship. In consultation with the Pastor, they make provisions for the elements and prepare all equipment for each observance of the ordinance. Following the service, they will see that all equipment is cleaned and returned to the storage cabinet.

(9) **Tellers**

The Tellers shall consist of eighteen (18) ordained deacons. The principal function of the Tellers will be to count the Sunday School and church monetary receipts each Sunday morning and make timely deposits at the appropriate bank(s). The Deacon Council will recommend a Chairperson.

Section II. Church Committees (Standing)

This section affirms guidance of such areas as committee formulation, selection, nomination, terms of service, and responsibilities/duties of committee members. The church, in a business meeting, may add, cancel, or change committees as needed. A majority of the members present and voting in a business meeting can make committee changes. All committees will be under the rotation system. Where possible, one-third (1/3) of the members will rotate off. A member rotating off cannot be considered for reelection to the same committee until the elapse of one (1) year. Committees are always under the direction and guidance of the church. The Pastor shall serve as an Ex-Officio member of each committee.

(1) Committee on Committees

This committee shall consist of six (6) members.

Election of two (2) Committee on Committees members shall be made annually along with the deacons. Members may nominate and submit names to the church office not later than June 15th each year the Committee on Committees' nominees. The Nominating Committee will also nominate and ensure that the total nomination list is a minimum of four (4) Committee on Committees' nominees. The Nominating Committee will contact each person nominated prior to publishing the list of nomination to verify willingness to serve if elected. The names of those nominees who choose not to serve on the committee will not be included on the nomination list. The list of nomination will be compiled and available at the time of election. No distinction is to be made with regards to nomination source. The list of Committee on Committees' nominees shall be published in the church bulletin approximately one week before election. In the event of death, resignation, etc., the next highest vote receiver will serve out the term of the vacated position.

It is the function of this committee to recommend, for church approval, the members to serve on all church committees. This committee will recommend chairpersons for each committee. The Chairman of Deacons and Pastor will recommend the chairperson of the Committee on Committees each year.

(2) **Budget and Finance Committee**

This committee shall consist of six (6) members. The Church Treasurer shall also serve as an Ex-Officio member.

After input, consultation, and resolution with department directors and chairperson of committees, the Budget and Finance Committee shall prepare an inclusive annual church budget and submit it to the deacons for their review and then to the church for appropriate action. The budget shall be presented to the church not later than the December business meeting.

This committee shall recommend to the church any changes to the budget during the church year. The budget will be reviewed, discussed, changed, and approved by the church in a business meeting. At this meeting the committee will apprise the Church of original requirements and amounts proposed for funding.

This committee shall review all designated gifts. When, and if, this committee decides that a designated gift may not be appropriate for the church to disburse, they will bring their recommendation to the church for resolution.

(3) **Personnel Committee**

This committee shall consist of three (3) members.

This committee assists the church in matters related to employed personnel administration. Its work includes such areas as the following surveys: staff needs, employment, salaries, benefits, and personnel services. Though the work of the committee concerns practical administrative details, the committee should operate in the framework of Christian understanding and devotion. The committee will recruit and recommend any additional or new employees. Development or amendment of job descriptions, personnel policies, and procedures will be the responsibility of this committee.

(4) **Children's Committee**

This committee shall consist of six (6) members. The Director of Children's Ministry shall also serve as an Ex-Officio member.

This committee will assist the Director of Children's Ministry in planning, developing, promoting and coordinating a comprehensive children's ministry (Birth thru 5th grade). This committee will also coordinate the church's nursery activities to formulate and recommend policies for church adoption and to inform church members of nursery policies.

(5) **Music Committee**

This committee shall consist of six (6) members. The Minister of Music shall also serve as an Ex-Officio member.

The principal function of this committee is assisting the Minister of Music and church in the general supervision and maintenance of the organ, piano, other musical instruments, church music, hymnals, choir robes, and a spiritual music program.

It shall be the duty of this committee to advise the church and those in leadership responsibility concerning matters related to the music programs of the church. The committee will promote the best choirs and music ministry available for all church programs and activities. It recommends to the church any policies and procedures concerning principles of the music ministry.

(6) **Scholarship Committee**

This committee shall consist of three (3) members.

This committee shall administer the scholarship program according to the specific stipulations and bylaws upon which the scholarship fund was established.

(7) **Nominating Committee**

This committee shall consist of six (6) members, three (3) men and three (3) women. The Minister of Education shall also serve as an Ex-Officio member.

The principal function of this committee is to recommend personnel for the staffing of all church leadership positions filled by

volunteers in the membership. Names of persons to be nominated for election by the church should be presented in a church business meeting only after the consent of the nominee and as early as possible to prepare for the new church year. During the church year, they will also be responsible for filling vacancies or nominating additional officers, teachers, etc., as needed.

(8) **House and Grounds Committee**

This committee shall consist of nine (9) members.

This committee shall have the following responsibilities:

Decorating and furnishing: This committee shall be responsible for seeing that the church property is tastefully decorated and furnished. Colors, draperies, furnishings, and floor covering shall be selected and purchased only upon its recommendations. This responsibility does not include decorations for parties, plays, pageants, nor is it to infringe upon the work of the Flower Committee.

Maintenance of house and grounds: This committee shall be responsible for the general appearance and upkeep of all church property and grounds. It shall also see that adequate supplies are available. It shall make a regular and systematic inspection of all church property and keep the property repaired, improved, and decorated as the budget provides. It shall endeavor to keep the buildings clean and the grounds neat and trimmed and shall be on constant guard to eliminate fire and safety hazards. A further responsibility shall be to see that the buildings are open for services, closed and locked at night, and adequately heated and air-conditioned.

This committee and the Pastor shall supervise the duties performed by the Custodial Contractor. They will biannually request the invitation of bids for the custodial contract, evaluate bids and recommend to the church the contractor that offers best value. This committee will make an annual written evaluation for purpose of considering options of the custodial services' contract. They will advise the church and the contractor of their evaluation not later than the end of December each year.

This committee shall have the authority to purchase equipment and supplies and authorize normal maintenance and repairs as provided in the budget, not to exceed \$500.00 per item. This limitation shall not apply to emergency repairs. Any expenditure (equipment or services) over \$2,000.00 must have two written bids and be approved by the House and Grounds Committee, and Council of Deacons. This action will be presented to the church at the next scheduled business meeting.

(9) **Long Range Planning Committee**

This committee shall consist of six (6) members.

This committee shall continually study the programs, goals, and objectives of the church in order to formulate plans and actions for the future growth of the church. The committee should use every source of information that is available such as U.S. census, school census, population changes, and local data. The committee shall make recommendations to the church for approval of proposed programs and needs, both short- and long- term.

(10) **Benevolence Committee**

This committee shall consist of three (3) members. The Minister of Education shall also serve as an Ex-Officio member.

The principal function of this committee is to perform acts of benevolence to persons in need in the name of Christ and this church. The need can be food, shelter, clothing, or spiritual. This committee will work closely with the Pastor and Minister of Education in reviewing requests for assistance. All church benevolence expenditures should be approved by the Pastor, Minister of Education, or this committee. Records and information concerning needs or help rendered will be kept on file in the church office.

(11) **Vehicle Committee**

This committee shall consist of three (3) members.

The principal function of this committee is to see that the church's vehicles are always in good condition. Vehicles should meet all local

and federal safety standards. They should insure that only authorized and qualified operators drive the vehicles. This committee shall formulate policies regarding the use of the church vehicles. This committee shall make sure regular maintenance/service is performed as necessary. They shall bring to the attention of the church any major repairs that are necessary.

(12) **Audio-Visual Committee**

This committee shall consist of three (3) members. The Minister of Music shall also serve as an Ex-Officio member.

This committee shall have the responsibility for maintenance of all audio-visual equipment in the church. They should assure that all audio-visual equipment is in working order for all services. This committee shall make recommendations to the church for the purchase of any audio-visual equipment.

(13) **Baptismal Committee**

This committee shall consist of six (6) members for the Traditional Worship Service and six (6) members for the Contemporary Worship Service.

The principal function of this committee is to assist the Pastor in preparing for the ordinance of baptism. The members of this committee shall assure that clean baptismal clothes and towels are available, assist candidates for baptism into and out of the water. They shall assist candidates with dressing before and after baptism, when necessary. They are responsible for making sure that towels and baptismal clothes are cleaned and properly stored. Before baptismal services, this committee shall also check the water temperature.

(14) **Mission Involvement Committee**

This committee shall consist of nine (9) members.

This committee shall assist the church staff in accomplishing mission efforts. This committee shall vigorously study and promote mission opportunities and shall coordinate all mission involvement expenditures with the Budget and Finance Committee.

(15) Flower Committee

This committee shall consist of twelve (12) members.

This committee shall be in charge of decorating the church during holidays, special events, and provide for sanctuary flowers year-round.

(16) Insurance Committee

This committee shall consist of three (3) members.

This committee, with church approval, shall obtain adequate insurance for all buildings, health, life, vehicles, liability, and workers' compensation. They are responsible for budgeting adequate funds to obtain the necessary insurance (renewal or new) at the best value. They shall review all policies at least annually to determine if adequate coverage exists. They will obtain bids from at least three (3) sources every two (2) years to assure that the church is getting the best possible coverage for its money. They shall review all claims and payments for insurance. The committee shall report annually to the church relative to insurance coverage, cost, claims, etc.

(17) Youth Committee

This committee shall consist of six (6) adult members. The Minister of Students shall also serve as an Ex-Officio member. The committee, in concert with the Minister of Students, shall augment itself with six (6) additional members drawn from the church youth. The committee shall recruit students in a manner that will ensure fair and equitable age and gender representation. Students shall have full voting rights and shall serve 6-month terms.

This committee is to serve as advisors to the church in developing programs and activities of interest to the youth that will provide spiritual, mental, and physical growth. This committee shall provide adult chaperons, when needed. Whenever a Minister of Students vacancy occurs, they shall work closely with the Personnel Committee to recruit a replacement.

(18) **Christian Life Committee**

This committee shall consist of three (3) members.

This committee is the contact point for coordination of Christian Life matters with the local Baptist Association, State Association, and Southern Baptist Convention.

This committee shall keep abreast of activities in the community that may adversely affect the family/individuals, and advise the church membership. The committee will support, with church approval, local and national groups that are attempting to promote better moral and family values. Educational materials pertaining to Christian Life should be obtained and made available to the church members. Periodic reports should be made to the church.

This committee will promote awareness of issues relating to the sanctity of human life in accordance with God's Word and to provide leadership for the church to develop and support ministries of a pro-life nature.

(19) **Fellowship-Kitchen Committee**

This committee shall consist of twelve (12) members.

The principal function of this committee is the formulation of policies for the kitchen and for communicating these policies to the church membership. They shall be mature individuals and willing to study methods to improve the services of the church kitchen. They are to be in charge of the kitchen, being sure it is maintained with needed items and all equipment is kept clean and operational and meets health standards. This committee shall establish policies and procedures for using church kitchen facilities for weddings, receptions, banquets, parties, etc.

(20) **Office Automation Committee**

This committee shall consist of three (3) members.

This committee shall have the responsibility for maintenance of all computers and office automation equipment in the church. They

should assure that the equipment is in working order. This committee shall make recommendations to the church for the purchase of any computers and office automation equipment.

(21) **Wedding Committee**

This committee shall consist of three (3) members. The Minister of Music and the Chair of the House and & Grounds Committee shall also serve as Ex-Officio members.

The principal function of this committee is to establish and review church rules concerning the use of church facilities for weddings and receptions. The committee will be responsible for assuring that someone from the church is in attendance at each such function in order to insure that proper care is taken of the church facility and equipment. The committee will also establish guidelines and rules concerning wedding services. This might include charges, scheduling, music, decorations, and other areas that may need review.

III. Church Program Organizations

All organizations must be approved by the church and shall be under church control. Officers of church organizations shall be elected annually, with term beginning September first, upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee.

No individual or group shall hold regular stated meetings in or use any room or other area of the church regularly or periodically unless such meetings or services so held are recognized as a function or agency of the church or held by its consent or approval.

Church organizations shall regularly report the activities of their organizations to the church.

The pastor is to be considered ex officio member of all church organizations and his leadership is to be recognized in each one.

(1) **The Sunday School**

There shall be a Sunday School, divided into departments and classes, for all ages and conducted under the direction of a Sunday

School Director for the study of God's Word. Sunday School will be conducted each Sunday morning.

The tasks of the Sunday School shall be to teach the Bible revelation; lead in reaching all prospects for the church; lead all the church to worship, witness, learn, and minister daily; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

The Sunday School Director shall be elected no later than the July business meeting to begin working with the Nominating Committee in enlisting workers and making plans for the new church year.

(2) **Discipleship Training**

The church training organization shall serve as the training unit of the church. Its tasks shall be to train church members to perform the functions of the church; train church leaders; orient new church members; teach Christian theology, Christian ethics, Christian history; and church policy and organization.

Church training shall be organized to reach all ages and conducted under the direction of a general director. Teaching units/classes shall be organized as needed.

He/she shall be elected not later than July 1st each year to begin working with nominating committee in enlisting workers and making plans for the new church year.

(3) **Brotherhood**

The Brotherhood shall be the church's organization for mission education, mission action, and mission support for men, young men, and boys. Its tasks shall be to teach missions, engage in mission actions, and support local and world missions through prayer and giving.

The organization shall be under the direction of the Brotherhood Director and shall have such officers and organizations as needed. The Brotherhood meets each month and provides inspirational speakers and fellowship.

(4) **Women's Ministry Leadership Team**

The Women's Ministries Leadership Team shall represent, coordinate, encourage, and communicate to the church ministries and activities involving women of the church and /or initiated by women's organizations or ministries in the church. The team shall be responsible for managing a calendar and budget for women's organizations and the ministries according to church guidelines.

The Women's Ministries Leadership Team shall have a director who is elected annually by the team. Members of the team shall include the Women's Prayer Ministry Leader, Tapestry Editor, WMU Director, Women's Events Coordinator, and other such members as deemed necessary to accomplish its purposes.

The Director of the Women's Ministries Leadership Team shall represent the women's organizations and ministries on the church council.

(5) **Women's Missionary Union**

The Women's Missionary Union shall be the mission education, mission action, and mission support organization of the church for women, young women, girls, and preschool children. Its tasks shall be to teach missions; engage in mission action; support world missions through prayer and giving.

The organization shall be under the leadership of the WMU Director and shall have such officers and organizations as needed.

(6) **Church Music Program**

The church music organization, under the direction of the church-elected Minister of Music, shall be the music education, training, and performance organization of the church. Its tasks shall be to teach music, train persons to lead, sing, and play music; provide music in the church and community; and provide organization and leadership for special music projects of the church.

IV. Church Program Services

The church shall maintain media center services and recreation services for the purpose of enriching and extending the ministries and programs of the church.

- The media center service shall be the resource center for the church. Its personnel shall seek to provide and promote the use of printed and audiovisual resources. They also shall provide consultation to church leaders and members in the use of the printed and audiovisual resources. The personnel shall consist of the Librarian(s).

- The recreation service shall seek to meet the recreational needs of members and groups. Its personnel shall provide recreation activities, consultation, and resources, along with on-site rules and scheduling methods. The personnel shall consist of the Fellowship – Kitchen Committee.

V. Church Council

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.

The primary functions of the Church Council shall be to recommend to the church suggested objectives and church goals; to review and coordinate ministry and program plans recommended by church officers, organizations, and committees; to recommend to the church the use of leadership, calendar time, and other resources according to program priorities; and to evaluate achievements in terms of church objectives and goals.

The personnel of the Church Council shall be the pastor and professional staff, directors of: Women's Ministry Leadership Team, Brotherhood, Chairman of Deacons, and Chairman of Committee on Committees.

All matters agreed upon by the Council that have not already been approved shall be referred to the church for approval or disapproval.

VI. Church Ordinances

(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.

- The pastor (or an ordained minister) shall administer baptism. The Baptism Committee shall assist in the preparation for, and the observance of, baptism.

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

- A person who professes Christ and is not baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by the pastor and/or staff or deacons.

(2) The Lord's Supper

The church shall observe the Lord's Supper at least once a quarter. The pastor and deacons shall choose the date. The pastor and deacons shall administer the Lord's Supper, with the Lord's Supper Coordinators being responsible for the physical preparations.

VII. Church Meetings

(1) Worship Services

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday evening for the worship of Almighty God. Prayer, praise, singing, preaching, instruction, and evangelism shall be among the ingredients of these services. The pastor shall direct the services. In the pastor's absence, the direction of the service shall be the responsibility of the associate pastor, chairman of the deacons and another staff member, in that order.

(2) Special Services

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

(3) Business Meetings

The Treasurer will provide a copy of the General Accounting Monthly Financial Report on the Wednesday night following the second Sunday for approval. All other business will be conducted at a quarterly meeting during the months of March, June, September and December unless the provisions for a Special or Emergency Business Meeting have been met as specified by the Constitution Section VII (4) or (5).

All business brought before the church requires at least a majority vote for approval. Any member has the right to bring items of interest/business to a business meeting for discussion or approval. If the moderator determines that item presented needs further review he may order it tabled or referred to appropriate committee before any action is taken.

(4) Special Business Meetings

The church shall conduct called business meetings to consider matters of special nature and significance. The pastor, the deacons, or any committee shall request the meeting. The clerk shall also call a Special Business Meeting upon receiving the written application of any five (5) adult members specifying the subject. A one-week notice must be given for the specially called business meeting unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical, in which case an Emergency Business Meeting would be called. The Special Business Meetings shall be announced at the public service on the Lord's Day preceding the meeting, along with a written notice being placed in the bulletin or as a special mail-out. The notice shall include the subject, the date, and the time and place.

(5) Emergency Business Meetings

An Emergency Business Meeting shall be called when the physical or spiritual well-being of the church is at stake. In such cases, the meeting shall be called by the pastor, chairman of deacons, or at least ten (10) church members including four (4) members of the deacon council. At least 75% of the members present must agree that the business to be addressed constitutes an emergency before the church can enter into a meeting under this emergency procedure.

(6) Quorum

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

(7) Parliamentary Rules

The authority for parliamentary rules of procedures for all business meetings of the church shall be “Robert’s Rules of Order, Revised.” The Constitution and Bylaws shall take precedent if there is any conflict between it and “Robert’s Rules of Order, Revised.”

VIII. Church Finances

(1) Budget

The Budget and Finance Committee, in consultation with the appropriate committees, shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget indicating by items the amount needed and sought for all local and other expenses. It is understood that membership in this church involves financial obligation to support the church and its causes. This financial support shall be obtained through regular proportionate gifts from the church members.

(2) Accounting Procedures

All acceptable designated and undesignated funds received shall pass through the hands of the church treasurer, or financial secretary, and be properly recorded on the books of the church. Designated gifts are acceptable if they are designated to Christian organizations, institutions, and church-approved objectives. If the designated gift does not meet these provisions as interpreted by the Budget and Finance Committee, they will bring their recommendation to the church for resolution. The records of the church must be maintained to comply with Internal Revenue Service regulations.

(3) Fiscal Year

The church fiscal year begins on January 1st and ends December 31st.

IX. Church Operations Manual

When it is unclear as to the meaning of any part of this Constitution and Bylaws, the pastor and the Chairman of the Deacons will make the interpretation/meaning. Their decision will prevail until the church changes the constitution or bylaws.

X. Amendments

Changes in the constitution and bylaws shall be made at any business meeting of the church provided each amendment has been presented in writing at a previous business meeting and copies of the proposed amendment furnished to each member present at the earlier meeting. Amendments to the constitution and bylaws shall be by two-thirds (2/3) vote of church members present.

ADOPTION

This Constitution and Bylaws shall be adopted if two-thirds of the members voting at the business meeting to which they are proposed for adoption shall vote in favor of the adoption of it. The adoption of this Constitution and Bylaws shall effect repeal of the current Constitution and Bylaws and any rule previously adopted by the church in a business meeting that conflicts with this document.

This Constitution and Bylaws, having been adopted by the church in conference upon due recommendation of its Constitution and Bylaws Committee, shall become effective upon adoption by the church. However, all committees, officers, and teachers now at work under the old Constitution and Bylaws shall continue until they have discharged their duties committed to them or until the end of the church year.

Adopted in conference on the 30th day of September, 2009.

Mary Ruth McCord
Church Clerk