

By Laws

Updated February 2008

(Informational Preamble)

Section 1. General (pg 1)	Section 13. Counting Committee (pg 8)
Section 2. Church Government (pg 1)	Section 14. Program Organizations (pg 8)
Section 3. Membership (pg 1-4)	Section 15. Education (pg 8)
Section 4. Church Officers (pg 4)	Section 16. Nominating Committee (pg 9)
Section 5. Pastor (pg 4-6)	Section 17. Sunday School Director (pg 9)
Section 6. Deacons (pg 6)	Section 18. Church Council (pg 9-10)
Section 7. Moderator (pg 6)	Section 19. Long Range Planning Committee (pg 10)
Section 8. Clerk (pg 6-7)	Section 20. Women's Ministries Director (pg 10)
Section 9. Treasurer (pg 7)	Section 21. Music Committee (pg 10)
Section 10 Finance Committee (pg 7)	Section 22. Missions Committee (pg 10)
Section 11. Trustees (pg 8)	Section 23. Evangelism/Local Outreach Committee (pg 10-11)
Section 12. Church Committees (pg8)	Amendments (pg 11)

Section 1. General

This is an independent Bible-believing Church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, voluntarily affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention. God alone is recognized as the spiritual head of this church. The membership of this local body retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the church's spiritual and temporal life. The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership as mandated by the Holy Bible.

Section 2. Church Government

Section 3. Membership

A. Qualifications:

1. A member must be born again, having received, by faith, the free gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
2. A member must be able to clearly articulate his salvation experience.
3. A member must have been baptized by immersion subsequent to his profession of faith.
4. A member must be in agreement with the Baptist Faith and Message, as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000.
5. A member must demonstrate a consistent Christian walk.

6. A member must be in agreement with the Constitution and By-laws of this local body.

B. Process:

1. Each candidate, including those who come either by letter of transfer, or by personal statement of faith, shall be examined by the Pastors and Deacons as to his compliance with the aforementioned qualifications for membership.

2. The Pastor shall recommend the candidate at any regular business meeting of the church for congregational vote.

3. The candidate shall receive a favorable vote of members present and voting. In the event of an unfavorable vote the objection will be investigated by the Pastors and Deacons after which the candidate's request for membership will either be withdrawn or resubmitted.

4. Upon acceptance into the membership, the right hand of fellowship will be extended.

5. Those members who have been placed on an inactive membership list may be restored to active membership by recommendation of the Pastors and Deacons.

C. Rights and Responsibilities:

1. Every member of the church, 18 years of age or older, is entitled to vote at all elections and on all business under consideration submitted to the church at any business meeting, provided the member is present, or provision has been made for absentee ballots.

2. Every member of the church is eligible for consideration by the membership as a candidate for elected office in the church.

3. Every member is encouraged to exercise Biblical stewardship in the giving of tithes, offerings, talents and spiritual gifts.

4. Every member is encouraged to participate in corporate worship, Sunday school, weekly Bible studies, and the regular ministry activities of the church.

5. Every member must realize his responsibility to serve the Lord Jesus Christ by serving this local body in the following ways:

a. Utilizing his spiritual gifts and natural abilities to serve in one or more areas of ministry in this local body.

b. Recognizing and practicing the Biblical admonition of Galatians 5:13 to "serve one another in love."

D. Discipline of Members:

1. Definition of Church Discipline: The term "DISCIPLINE" refers to the Biblical method of confronting sin within the local church body, according to the principles set forth in Matthew 18:15-17.

2. Objectives of Church Discipline: The objectives of all Church discipline shall be twofold: for the spiritual good of the member(s) being disciplined, restoration being the desired end (Galatians 6:1-2); and for the preservation of the testimony, the purity and the peace of the church. (1 Corinthians 5:1-6:8).

3. Attitude for Church Discipline: Church discipline is one of the most important, yet sobering aspects of the corporate life of the church. Therefore, it must never be entered into lightly. Those who participate in this process must do so with the attitude mandated by Galatians 6:1. First, discipline requires one who is spiritual, that is, one who clearly demonstrates godliness before this congregation. Second, it requires that those involved in administering the discipline do it with meekness and an awareness that they themselves are just as weak, and as capable of stumbling as the fallen brother(s).

4. Causes for Discipline:

a. Demonstrating any persistent and unrepentant course of life which clearly contradicts the moral laws of God's Word.

b. Advocating teachings and/or practices opposed to those set forth in the Constitution and By-laws of this church.

c. Being directly involved in any single impropriety, whether of a serious legal or moral nature, which could undermine the testimony of this church in the community.

5. Procedure for Discipline: Any member of this church body who clearly demonstrates any of the aforementioned causes needs to be dealt with according to the principles set forth in Matthew 18:15-17 and I Corinthians 5:2-13.

a. Firstly, the member at fault should be confronted privately.

b. If the member does not repent, then secondly, he should be confronted again in the presence of one or two additional witnesses.

c. If still no repentance is demonstrated, then thirdly, the matter needs to be taken before the entire church membership.

d. If there is still no repentance after a reasonable amount of time, then fourthly, the offending member must be expelled from the membership of this congregation and is to be treated as though he were an unbeliever. He needs to be marked and made an example of, which will result in one of two things. If he continues to be unrepentant, the Scriptures clearly indicate that he will experience God's discipline, which may even result in God physically removing him from this earth, so as to not bring further shame to the church and to the name of Christ. Or secondly, if he repents, giving clear evidence of his willingness to be held accountable on a personal level by one or two other members, he will be restored to fellowship, and even membership, with this local body (Galatians 6:1).

6. Restoration of Expelled Members: The church may restore to membership any person previously expelled, upon his request to the Pastors and Deacons. Consideration for reinstatement to membership and fellowship will be based upon clear evidence of repentance and compliance with the conditions articulated during the discipline process; and will be enacted by a vote of the church membership.

7. Termination of Membership: Termination of membership may occur by one of the

following:

- a. By letter of transfer to another church.
- b. By any member uniting in membership with another church without requesting a letter.
- c. As the final result of an unrepentant church member under church discipline.
- d. By request of the member.
- e. By death.

f. By non-attendance. A member who has had no contact with this local body for a period of 6 months or more may be placed on an inactive membership status by the Deacons. An inactive member may not vote or serve in church roles which require membership.

Section 4. Church Officers

All who serve as officers of the church shall be members of this church. The officers of this church shall be the Pastor, the Deacons, a Moderator, a Clerk, a Treasurer and Trustees.

Section 5. Pastor

A.) Qualifications:

The qualifications of the Pastor are those given in 1Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1: 5-9; 1Pet. 5:1-4. The Pastor having been examined and found qualified and called to lead the church as an under shepherd of Jesus Christ, shall be in esteem and respect (1Thess. 5:12-13; 1Tim. 5:17-19; Heb. 13:17).

B.) Call of a Pastor

Whenever a vacancy occurs the church shall elect a pastor search committee of no less than five members. The Chairman of Deacons shall be one of the members assigned to this committee. It shall also be the responsibility of this committee to supply either an Intern pastor or preachers for all services. The Pastor Search Committee shall collect recommendations and resumes of possible candidates and after prayer and due consideration select those who shall come as candidates.

Each candidate who is presented to the congregation will first be asked to speak at the regular Sunday services on one or more Sundays. He shall be thoroughly examined by the Pastor Search Committee and or the congregation as to his training, experience, sincerity, humility, character and beliefs. He must be in agreement with the by-laws and doctrines of this church.

The Pastor Search Committee shall provide the congregation with all pertinent information concerning the candidate being presented and be prepared to answer any questions by the congregation. The congregation shall then be asked to vote prayerfully seeking the Lord, realizing that God's man do not always have the best recommendations, the greatest abilities or the finest appearances (Sam. 16:7; 1Cor. 1:26-29; 1Cor. 2:1-5).

Each candidate shall be considered individually and a decision rendered before another is heard. The Pastor will be called by a 90% vote of the members present at a properly announced meeting (every attempt should be made to receive a unanimous call). The candidate shall be notified personally and in writing as to the vote of the church.

C.) Duties of the Pastor:

The Pastor shall be the spiritual leader and teacher of the church and shall perform such duties pertaining to the office as prescribed in the New Testament including;

1) To earnestly carry on preaching, teaching and training ministry with the aim of bring each member to a place of spiritual maturity and fruitfulness and to a place of spiritual harmony with the rest of the church body. (Eph.4: 11-16; Col. 1: 28-29; II Tim. 2:2)

2) To set an example in Christian living (I Tim. 4:12; I pet. 5:1-3).

3) He is to be a consistent visitor discovering the needs of those within the congregation and to do the work of an evangelist presenting Christ to the lost (James 1: 27; II Tim. 4:5).

4) He is responsible for the overall actions of the church. He shall be recognized as an ex-officio member of all church organizations and committees (Heb. 13:17).

5) Pastor (s) in a full-time position will have 8 weeks off after serving for a four year consecutive period of time. (sabbatical rest).

D.) Salary and Benefits:

The Pastor(s) salary and benefits will be determined by the church upon recommendation from the Finance Committee and will be reviewed annually prior to the annual meeting.

E.) Termination of the Pastor:

The Pastors relationship with the church may be terminated at any time by the presentation of his resignation in writing to the board of Deacons or by a 90% vote of the membership.

Previous notice of 60 days must be given by either party desiring the termination. However, this may be waived by mutual agreement. Except in instances of gross misconduct by the Pastor the Pastor so excluded by office, the church will compensate the Pastor with not less than one - twelfth (1/12) of his total annual compensation shall be rendered in not more than thirty (30) days.

Section 6. Deacons

A.) Role and Qualifications:

Deacons shall be men in full communion with the church, of mature judgment, unquestioned Christian character, loyal to the Lord Jesus Christ and meeting the qualifications of Acts 6: 1-7; I Tim. 3: 8-13. Who will be involved in caring for the church's members and other persons in the community. Lead the church performing its tasks. They shall be responsible for preparing and assisting the Pastor in observing the Ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

B.) Election and Term of Office:

The number of deacons shall be determined by need and by availability of those who genuinely meet the qualifications. The deacons hold office for three years with the expiration of regular terms arranged so that one third the number of deacons be elected each year. Elections shall be by secret ballot at a regular business meeting. Immediate reelection of a deacon is permissible.

The deacons presented for vote shall be provided to the congregation at least one week in advance of the meeting via a list compiled by the pastor and existing deacons. This list will compose only those who have been examined, counseled, found qualified and will to serve. Election shall be by a 90% vote of the members voting.

Deacons will have one year off after service for a three year, consecutive period of time. (sabbatical rest).

Section 7. Moderator

The church shall elect annually a moderator as its presiding officer. In the absence of the moderator, the chairman of deacons shall preside: Or in the absence of both, the clerk shall call the church to order and preside over the election of an acting moderator. The pastor may serve if so designated by the church.

Section 8. Clerk

The clerk of the church shall keep in an orderly manner a record of all the actions of the church except as otherwise herein provided. The clerk is responsible for keeping a register of names of members, with dates of admission, dismissal, or death. The clerk shall also keep a record of baptisms. He/she shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church, preserved on file all meetings where such notice is necessary, as indicated by this constitution. The clerk shall be elected annually. The church may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to a church secretary. All church records are church property and should be filed in the church office, when an office is maintained.

Section 9. Treasurer

The church shall elect annually a church treasurer as its financial officer along with an assistant treasurer, also known as the Financial Secretary. It should be the duty of the Treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel, all money or things of value paid or given to the church. Keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the church at each regular business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements of the proceeding month.

All funds received for any and all purposes shall pass through the hands of the church treasurer, or financial secretary, and be properly recorded on the books of the church. The church shall elect annually an assistant treasurer. It shall be the duty of the assistant treasurer/financial secretary to be able to do the work of the treasurer whenever the treasurer is incapacitated or the office of the treasurer is made void. A detailed job description outlining the duties of the treasurer will be provided.

Section 10. Finance Committee

- 1) The Committee shall consist of the Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Bookkeeper, a Deacon and 2 members at large.
- 2) The committee with the pastor(s), shall prepare the Annual Budget for submission to the church at the November Business Meeting. They shall supervise the raising of all money in the church and shall consider it their responsibility to promote in every way spiritual giving on the part of the entire membership of the church.
- 3) They shall be responsible for recommending to the church any changes in the pastor(s) salary and benefits.
- 4) The committee will supervise the raising and disbursement of all church funds.

Section 11. Trustees

When needed the church shall elect three trustees to serve as legal officers for the church. They shall hold in trust the church property. Upon a specific vote of the church property. Upon a specific vote of the church authorizing each action, they shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property. When the signatures of the trustees required, they shall sign legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, or rental of property, or other legal documents to church approved matters. Trustees shall serve on a three year rotation basis with one third to being elected each year.

Section 12. Church Committees

All committee members shall be members of this church. The committees of this church building and grounds committee, a finance committee, a long range planning committee,

and such other regular committees as the church shall authorize. Additional regular committees may be added by the amendment procedures prescribed within these by-laws. All church committee members shall be recommended by the church unless otherwise specified with these by-laws. Committee members shall serve one year and then be up for reelection or new members voted in.

Section 13. Counting Committee

1.) The counting committee will serve with and under the direction of the treasurer in counting such moneys as may be given to the church.

Section 14. Program Organizations

The church shall maintain programs of bible teaching; Church member training; Church leader training; New member orientation; Mission education, action and support: and music education, training and performance. All organizations related to the church programs: All officers being elected by the church and reporting regularly to the church; and all programs activities are subject to church coordination and approval. The church shall provide the human resources, the physical resources, and the appropriate advancement of these programs.

Section 15. Education

1.) The Sunday school shall be the basic organization for the bible teaching program. Its task shall be to teach the biblical revelation, reach persons for Christ and church membership, perform the functions of the church within its constituency, provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

2.) The Sunday school shall be organized by departments and /or classes, as appropriate for all ages, and shall be conducted under the direction of the Sunday School Director elected by the church.

3.) Other organizations may be added at anytime, such as discipleship training.

Section 16. Nominating Committee

1.) The Nominating Committee shall nominate all committees, coordinators, church officers, teachers and workers for Sunday school and church training, Women's Missionary Union Director, brotherhood director and such other officers as may be necessary.

2.) A base committee of three plus two alternatives shall be elected by ballot at the third morning worship service in January to give the broadest base to the voting. Advance notice shall be published in the church bulletin in the first two morning services in January. The three persons receiving the highest number of votes who agree to serve shall be elected to serve for one year. The two persons receiving the next highest number of votes and who agree to serve shall serve as alternatives in order to fill vacancies that may occur in the base committee during the year.

3.) Only one member of any family shall serve on the base committee. The person with the highest number of votes and who agrees to serve shall be the chairman. The person with the second highest number of votes and who agrees to serve shall be Vice Chairman. A committee of two or three deacons will be appointed by the Pastor to count the ballots and notify the nominees of their election. The base committee shall bring to the church nominations for Sunday School Director, Church Training Director, Women's Missionary Union Director and Brotherhood Director at the February or March church Business Meeting. After their election they shall become official members of the Nominating Committee.

Section 17. Sunday School Director

The Sunday School Director shall be elected at the Annual Meeting and shall have charge of all administrative duties under the direction of , and in cooperation with the Pastor. These duties include supervising, planning, promoting, enlisting workers and keeping accurate records of attendance. Although elected annually he/she may serve concurrent terms.

Section 18. 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.

Regular members of the Church Council shall be the Pastor, other church staff members, directors of church program organizations, and committees and coordinators. All matters agreed upon by the council, which call for action not already approved shall be referred to the church for approval or disapproval. The Church Council will meet at least once each quarter.

Section 19. Long Range Planning Committee

1.) The Long Range Planning Committee shall discover and analyze long range church and

community needs, recommend long range goals and strategies to the congregation, evaluate the long range effectiveness of church programs, and interpret long range goals and strategies to appropriate groups.

2.) The committee shall include a chairman and necessary members.

Section 20. Director of Women's Ministries

- 1) Responsible for the organizing and overseeing all week-day women's bible studies. (this does not include Sunday School)
 - 2) Responsible for organizing and overseeing special women's events such as women's retreats and Mother-Daughter banquets.
 - 3) Nominated and elected like other officers and will become a regular member of the Church Council.
-

Section 21. Music Committee

- 1) This committee will regulate the funds for the music ministry.
 - 2) The committee will consist of the worship leader, one member of the music ministry and at least one member of the congregation at large.
-

Section 22. Missions Committee

- 1) Overseeing all mission projects.
 - 2) Taking an aggressive part in promoting special offerings, i.e. Lottie Moon and Annie Armstrong.
 - 3) Liaison for missionaries we support.
 - 4) Make recommendations at business meetings for future financial support.
 - 5) Promoting missions in the church and up keep of the missions bulletin boards.
 - 6) Committee of at least 3 members.
-

Section 23. Evangelism/Local Outreach Committee

- 1) This committee shall be a regular committee of the church, meeting at least once a month to pray for, and evaluate various strategies and programs for evangelism and local outreach.
 - 2) This committee shall be responsible for coordinating, delegating, planning, and organizing for the various outreach programs and ministries.
 - 3) Committee members shall be nominated to the church by the nominating committee and voted on each year by the church.
-

Amendments

Changes to the constitution and by-laws may be made at any regular business meeting of the church, provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous business meeting and copies of the proposed amendments shall be furnished to each member present at the previous meeting. Amendments to the by-laws shall have a concurrence of a majority of the members present and voting.

Adopted November 1998