



FIRSTBAPTIST **CANYON**

BYLAWS

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First Baptist Church
Canyon, Texas

BYLAWS

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the bylaws is to help us accomplish the tasks of this Church “decently and in order” (I Corinthians 14:40), and in an effective and efficient manner that is good stewardship of our time, gifts and resources. Our ultimate desire is to bring glory to God through the church.

ARTICLE I. NAME

Our congregation shall be known as First Baptist Church of Canyon, Texas (Church), a Southern Baptist church. We are a unique organization, like no other. We are divinely created and led, unified and empowered by the Spirit of God Himself. Our relationship to one another is designed by God like a “body” (I Corinthians 12:11-27, Ephesians 4:15-16), connected to one another and dependent on one another. We have each been placed by God into this Church, His Body, to accomplish a specific function. Thus the life and health of His Body depends on each of us participating fully and cooperatively.

ARTICLE II. CHURCH AUTHORITY

The Bible, God’s inerrant and infallible Word, is the final authority for all matters of faith and practice in the church. The congregation is the final authority for all matters of self-government of the church. Each member shall seek through earnest prayer and reasoned discussion to ensure that the church governs itself according to the principles found in Scriptures and that the church remains free from the control or supervision of any other ecclesiastical or denominational body, or from any governmental control or influence. The members of the church, through these bylaws, shall have the right to determine the requirements of Church membership.

ARTICLE III. CHURCH RELATIONSHIPS

Section 1. A Texas Non-Profit Corporation

For legal purposes, the church is organized under the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act, Article 1396-1.01 et seq., of the Texas Revised Civil Statutes.

Section 2. Registered Office and Registered Agent

The registered office of the church is 1717 Fourth Avenue, Canyon, Texas 79015. The registered agent of the church is Jim Childers. The registered agent of the church shall be approved by a majority vote of the church.

Section 3. Cooperative Relationships

In accordance with what we believe to be God’s will, the church will cooperate with and support financially the Amarillo Area Baptist Association, the Baptist General Convention of Texas, the Southern Baptist Convention, and their individual and collective mission efforts at home and abroad.

ARTICLE IV. CHURCH POLITY

The biblical structure of a local New Testament church consists of members, elders, and deacons (Philippians 1:1).

Section 1. Members

Because of the fundamental equality of believers, each member plays an important role in the mission of the church. Church members are called to a shared life together, involving discipleship, fellowship, and care. Although the entire church does not have responsibility for every function of church governance, each member contributes greatly to the health of the church (Philippians 1:27). The leadership of elders in no way contradicts the prerogatives and liberties given to all who are in Christ. The congregation must also recognize the value and role of elders in the church (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13).

Section 2. Elders

The New Testament is clear about those who have scriptural responsibility to give oversight and care for the church. These men are called elders/overseers/shepherds (pastors). All three titles are used to refer to the same spiritual office of leadership in the church and are interchangeable (Acts 20:17, 28). Christ is the head of the church and He mediates His rule in the church through the shepherding of elders (1 Peter 5:1-4). Elders shepherd the church by leading the congregation in the Word of God and by feeding the congregation with the Word of God (1 Timothy 5:17) in order to equip the saints for the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ, and to grow in maturity in the image of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-13).

Section 3. Deacons

Deacons are spiritually qualified men selected by the members to serve the church by caring for the physical needs of the church, protecting the unity of the church, and supporting the elders of the church (Acts 6:1-7).

ARTICLE V. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Church Membership

This is a Baptist church under the sovereign Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government under His leadership in all phases of the life of

the church. The membership reserves the right to grant membership and to establish the requirement of such membership. This body shall be composed of persons who confess Jesus Christ to be their Savior and Lord, have been baptized by immersion and have been received into the fellowship of this Church.

Section 2. Candidacy for Church Membership

Any person may offer himself/herself as a candidate for membership in the church. To qualify for membership in the church, a person must be a believer in Jesus Christ, who has been baptized by immersion (unless physically unable), subsequent to, and as a non-essential to salvation, and who whole-heartedly believes in the Christian faith as revealed in the Scripture. Each member must agree to submit to the teaching of Scripture as expressed in the Articles of Faith (as stated in the church's Constitution) and must promise to keep the commitments expressed in the church Covenant (as stated in the church's Constitution).

All candidates shall request membership in the church by one of the following ways:

- a. Profession of a personal belief and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, accepting the promises and commands of Scripture, being baptized by immersion, subsequent to, and as a non-essential to, salvation.
- b. Transferring membership from a Baptist church of like faith and order.
- c. By statement of a personal relationship with Christ and believers' baptism which is baptism by immersion, subsequent to, and as a non-essential to, salvation.
- d. With respect to a person who, for reasons of health or other circumstances, cannot physically attend the church, may be accepted by proxy after professing a personal belief and faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, accepting the promises and commands of Scripture, being baptized by immersion (unless physically unable), subsequent to, and as a non-essential to, salvation.

Section 3. Acceptance on New Church Members (Granting of Membership)

- a. Membership in this Church shall be granted by a majority vote of those members present at a regular worship service or a Members' Meeting and contingent upon approval of an elder.
- b. Any questions about a candidate's qualifications for membership in the church shall be referred to the Elder Body.

Section 4. Rights, Duties and Responsibilities of Members

- a. All church members are exhorted to attend the services of the church on a regular basis, to freely and systematically give their tithes and offerings for the support of the church, its budgets and its ministries, to share in the work of the church as it seeks to fulfill the Great Commission, and by their testimony in word and deed, to reflect the Lordship of Jesus Christ.
- b. Every member of the church may participate in the Lord's Supper.
- c. Every member of the church, age eighteen (18) and above, is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in a Members' Meeting, provided the member is present.

- d. Every member of the church may be considered by the membership as a candidate for elective offices and positions of ministry in the church according to the eligibility identified in the bylaws and/or policies of this Church.
- e. Each church member should seek to resolve all conflicts with other members in accordance with Scripture.

Section 5. Conditions of Membership

- a. As a condition of membership, each church member agrees to waive his/her right to require a partition of any or all of the church property.
- b. As a condition of membership, and upon approval by the church, each church member agrees to abide by the terms of a church-approved plan of merger, consolidation or dissolution if revoked.

Section 6. Termination of Membership

Membership in this Church may be terminated as follows:

- a. Transfer of letter to another church. A letter will be granted to a Baptist church of like faith and order upon the request of such church, and will not be given to the individual member who leaves. Such action is to be confirmed by action of the church in a regular Members' Meeting.
- b. Any member who has joined another denomination shall be removed from the church roll by erasure. Such action is to be confirmed by action of the church in regular Members' Meeting.
- c. Upon the death of any member, the name is removed from the church membership roll.
- d. Any member may make a personal, written request to withdraw membership.

Section 7. Separation of Membership

If, through biblical discernment, (I Corinthians 5:9-13; Titus 3:10) the Elder Body determines that the conduct of a member brings reproach to the name of Christ or division within the church, the Elder Body shall recommend separation of the member from the church in accordance with Scriptural principles as follows:

- a. An attempt shall be made to counsel or minister to the member in a spirit of love and compassion, so that the member may repent and remain in the fellowship of the church (Matthew 18:15-16; Galatians 6:1). The privacy of the member shall be respected as much as may be reasonably possible.
- b. If the member remains unrepentant, the matter may be brought to the church (Matthew 18:17). No member may be separated from membership in the church without his/her consent, except by vote of the church (II Corinthians 2:6).
- c. Upon satisfactory evidence to the Elder Body of the excluded person's repentance and reformation, the church may restore to membership any person previously excluded, upon request of the excluded person and by vote of the church (II Corinthians 2:5-8).

ARTICLE VI. ELDERS

Section 1. Responsibilities of Elders

- a. To Spiritually Shepherd the church

1. Church Care – Elders are responsible to shepherd the church through the preaching and teaching of God’s Word and caring for the spiritual needs of the members through prayer, counseling, admonishment, and exhortation (Acts 6:4; 20:28; Hebrews 13:17; James 5:14-15; 1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Peter 5:1).
 2. Church Doctrine – Elders shall protect the doctrinal purity of the church in accordance with the church’s Articles of Faith by evaluation and approval of all that is taught in the ministries of the church. The elders shall provide interpretation of the church’s Articles of Faith should a question arise as to its meaning. Elders shall suggest, as needed, revision(s) to the church’s Articles of Faith in accordance with these bylaws (Galatians 1:6-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; Jude 3-4).
 3. Church Practice – Elders shall evaluate and ensure that all the practices of the church are in accordance with the Scriptures and the church’s Articles of Faith.
 4. Church Membership – Elders shall interview persons who present themselves as member candidates and will then present to the church for acceptance into membership those persons who are qualified to become members of the church in accordance with these bylaws.
 5. Church Discipline – Elders are to reprove, rebuke, and exhort the church with great patience and to practice church discipline in accordance with these bylaws (2 Timothy 4:2; Titus 1:9-11).
 6. Church Ordinances – Elders shall administer believer’s baptism and serve communion. The elders may assign qualified church members to conduct the ordinances.
 7. Church Services – Elders shall oversee all services that take place within the church to ensure the services adhere to the church’s Articles of Faith and these bylaws. The elders are responsible to minister God’s Word in the services, and they may approve outside speakers to minister the Word during such services.
- b. To Oversee the Ministries and Business of the church
1. Elders shall establish policies and practices for the church that are consistent with Scripture, the church’s Articles of Faith, and these bylaws (1 Timothy 3:4-5).
 2. Elders shall review and recommend, as needed, revisions to the church’s bylaws in accordance with these bylaws.
 3. Elders shall oversee the maintaining of adequate and correct financial accounts and books, business and legal records of the church, and proper use and maintenance of the church facilities.
 4. Elders shall oversee the committees of the church and appoint committees, as needed and in accordance with these bylaws, to carry out the ministries and business of the church in an orderly and acceptable manner (Acts 6:3).
 5. In the absence or incapacity of the Senior Pastor for either a permanent or defined period of time (such as sabbatical or illness), the Elder Body shall assume the ultimate responsibility for his duties any of which they may delegate to a pastoral staff member.
 6. Elders shall oversee the Senior Pastor search process in accordance with the selection process established in these bylaws. The Elder Body will appoint a committee in accordance with these bylaws to conduct the search process.
 7. Elders shall oversee the selection process of new elders in accordance with the elder selection process established in these bylaws (Titus 1:5). The Elder Body may appoint a committee in accordance with these bylaws to conduct the selection process.

8. Elders shall oversee the selection process of new deacons in accordance with the deacon selection process established in these bylaws (Acts 6:2-6). The Elder Body will appoint a committee in accordance with these bylaws to conduct the search process.
9. Elders shall establish ministerial and administrative positions, as needed and in accordance with these bylaws, to carry out the ministries and business of the church. And elders shall employ, supervise, evaluate, and terminate directors of ministry and support staff members, any of which they may delegate, in accordance with these bylaws and church policies.
10. Elders may write positional papers, in accordance with these bylaws, that articulate the church's interpretation, application, or conviction on particular doctrines or topics.
11. Elders shall maintain open communication with the church body through regular member meetings and through other venues as needed.

Section 2. Qualifications of Elders

- a. **Biblical Qualifications** – An elder must be a man who possesses the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. The demonstration of these qualifications is necessary for both initial consideration as an elder and for continued service as an elder.
 1. Blameless as a steward of God; above reproach (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6-7)
 2. A man who is the husband of one wife (1 Timothy 2:12; 3:2; Titus 1:6)
 3. Temperate, sober, vigilant (1 Timothy 3:2)
 4. Sober-minded, prudent (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)
 5. Of good behavior; orderly, respectable (1 Timothy 3:2)
 6. Given to hospitality, including the love of strangers (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)
 7. Apt to teach; able to teach; he can exhort believers and refute false teaching (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9)
 8. Not given to wine (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
 9. Not violent; not pugnacious (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
 10. Patient, moderate, forbearing, gentle (1 Timothy 3:3)
 11. Not a brawler; uncontentious; not soon angry or quick-tempered (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
 12. Not covetous; not a lover of money; not greedy of base gain (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
 13. Rules well his own house; his children are faithful, not accused of rebellion to God (1 Timothy 3:4; Titus 1:7)
 14. Not a novice; not a new convert (1 Timothy 3:6)
 15. Has a good report or reputation with outsiders (1 Timothy 3:7)
 16. Not self-willed (Titus 1:7)
 17. A lover of good men and things (Titus 1:8)
 18. Just, fair (Titus 1:8)
 19. Holy, devout (Titus 1:8)
 20. Self-controlled (Titus 1:8)
- b. **Calling and Confirmation** – An elder must be a man who has been called by God to serve as an elder. This calling is evidenced by the man's desire to serve as an elder (1 Timothy 3:1), and the church's confirmation of the man's character and giftedness to serve as an elder. (1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 2:1-2; 3 John 1:12).
- c. **Membership** – An elder must be an active member of the church as depicted in the church covenant located in the church's constitution.

- d. Doctrine – An elder must affirm and adhere to the church’s Articles of Faith as stated in the church’s constitution.

Section 3. Selection of Elders

- a. Initial Selection of Elders – In as much as the Senior Pastor is the only current elder of the church, he will follow the selection process as outlined below. In the initial selection of elders, the Senior Pastor may enlist other men, who are not being considered as elders, to assist him at any time in the process.
- b. Elder Selection Process
1. The Elder Body will seek input and recommendations from church members. After reviewing elder qualifications and responsibilities, members will be encouraged to submit to the elders the names of men whose lives and gifts are consistent with the role and task of an elder.
 2. After prayer and consideration, the Elder Body will interview some or all of the nominees to determine each man’s desire to serve and his qualifications as stated in these bylaws.
 3. The Elder Body will then present to the congregation the nominees who are best qualified to serve as an elder based on the number of elders needed.
 4. For a period of time, not less than thirty days, the congregation will have the opportunity to prayerfully consider each nominee’s qualifications for the office of elder. If members for any reason feel that the person may be unqualified, they should go to him in love with discretion and privately discuss their concerns (Matthew 18:15-18; Titus 1:7). If, after a discussion with the nominee, the members feel that their concern is unresolved, then they should approach the Elder Body with their concern. The elders will then discuss the concern with the nominee. Based on this conversation, one of the following results will be agreed upon:
 - Option 1: The man can withdraw himself from consideration and the process will cease.
 - Option 2: The Elder Body may deem the man unqualified for whatever reason and the process will cease.
 - Option 3: The man and the Elder Body agree that the process should continue.
 5. After the time of consideration, the current Elder Body shall call a special Members’ Meeting to present to the church the nominee(s) for the purpose of a vote of affirmation. If the nominee(s) is affirmed by a congregational vote of seventy-five percent, the newly elected elder(s) shall assume office immediately. If a nominee is not affirmed by the congregation, the Elder Body shall meet to discuss how to proceed.
 6. A man shall not concurrently hold the office of deacon and elder. Therefore, if a newly elected elder is currently serving as a deacon, his tenure as a deacon shall conclude at that time.
 7. If a man has not been ordained previously as an elder by this Church, he shall be ordained at a service scheduled for the occasion. (Acts 14:23)

Section 4. Informal Designation of Elders

The Elder Body will consist of both pastoral staff members of the church and lay members of the church. The staff members are informally referred to as ‘Staff Elders’ and lay members are informally referred to as ‘Lay Elders.’ These designations are informal because each elder shares

equally in the responsibilities and authority of the office of elder. These designations are necessary because evaluation, removal, and tenure of staff elders differs from that of lay elders.

- a. Lay Elders – Men who commit their time to serve as an elder of the church but are not employed by the church.
- b. Staff Elders
 1. Senior Pastor – The Senior Pastor by designation of his position and office in these bylaws continually serves as an elder of the church unless he voluntarily resigns or is removed from his position in accordance with these bylaws.
 2. Pastoral Staff – Pastoral staff members who are qualified in accordance with these bylaws may serve as an elder. He will go through the elder selection process as outlined in these bylaws. He shall not be subject to the term limitation as stated in these bylaws. He may resign as an elder but remain as a pastoral staff member.

Section 5. Number of Elders

The Elder Body shall determine the number of elders needed to carry out their responsibilities to the church, but the number should not be less than three (3) men. The Elder Body should seek to be composed of a majority of lay elders. Should circumstances arise that leave the church with fewer than three elders, the remaining elders shall act as soon as possible to propose qualified elders to the congregation in accordance with these bylaws.

Section 6. Term of Elders

An elder, other than staff elders, will serve a three-year term. After this term is complete, he may serve a second consecutive term if he is willing and by unanimous consent of the remainder of the elders and then by a seventy-five percent affirmation vote by the congregation. After two consecutive terms an elder must rotate off the Elder Body for at least one year before being considered to serve again. Should an elder be unable to fulfill his responsibilities due to a disability or unforeseen circumstance, the remaining elders may give him leave from his term and responsibilities until he is able to return or until his term is complete.

Section 7. Evaluation of Elders

The elders will undergo both formal and informal accountability. Formally, each year elders shall conduct a self-evaluation (1 Timothy 4:16) that will be reviewed by the remainder of the elders. Failure to consistently perform in any qualification or responsibility as stated in these bylaws is cause for immediate correction, and if unresolved, removal. Informally, elders shall continually watch over one another (Acts 20:28) and exhort or admonish when necessary. Should a person have an accusation against an elder, he/she must bring that accusation along with one or two other witnesses to the Elder Body (1 Timothy 5:19-20).

Section 8. Removal of Elders

An elder may voluntarily remove himself from office by resignation. An elder may involuntarily be removed from office by the unanimous opinion of the remainder of the Elder Body that he no longer meets the qualifications of an elder or fulfills the responsibilities of an elder as stated in these bylaws. The Elder Body will then call a special meeting of the church for such purpose. An affirmative vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the church members present and voting is necessary to remove the elder.

Section 9. Elder Body Meetings

- a. Regular Meetings – Meetings of the Elder Body shall be held on a monthly basis. Two-thirds (2/3) or more of its members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business of the elders at any regular meeting. The day, time, and location of the next regular meeting shall be set at each monthly meeting. Official minutes will be kept for regular meetings. The agenda for regular meetings will be set by the Chairman or Vice Chairman and Senior Pastor and then sent at least one week in advance to the elders. Church members may request to attend a regular meeting or to be placed on the agenda to discuss any matter or need with the Elder Body. Requests are to be made to the Chairman of the Elders. If approved, the request will be added to the agenda.
- b. Special Meetings – Special meetings of the Elder Body may be called by order of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, the Secretary, the Senior Pastor or by a quorum of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Elder Body. Notice of special meetings shall be given at least three days in advance by appropriate forms of communication that state the purpose and agenda of the meeting. Two-thirds (2/3) or more of its members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business of the elders at any special meeting. Official minutes of special meetings shall be kept. Should a situation arise that demands the immediate attention of the elders, the Chairman along with the Senior Pastor may call a special meeting under three days.
- c. Closed Meetings – At any regular or special meetings, the Elder Body may decide to call a closed meeting. Closed meetings may be called when the topic of discussion is deemed sensitive. Only the Elder Body is permitted to attend closed meetings. Minutes shall be kept and sealed for closed meetings.
- d. Decision Making Process – Decisions shall be reached after prayerful consideration in a spirit of humility, with each elder regarding one another before himself. Any decision made by the Elder Body will be a unified “yes” or “no” decision. All elders agree to be unified in the final decision, “yes” or “no,” in public and in private. When the elders are deciding upon a matter, the following procedure will be followed except where otherwise stated in these bylaws:
 - Each elder present at the meeting shall vote yes, no, or abstain. Abstention of a vote will not be counted as a vote. Voting by proxy is not allowed.
 - A matter receiving a unanimous “yes” vote is a “yes” decision.
 - A matter receiving a majority “no” vote is a “no” decision.
 - A matter not receiving a unanimous “yes” vote nor a majority “no” vote, may be reconsidered at a later meeting. Before another vote on the matter is taken, additional information, discussion, godly counsel, and prayerful consideration will be allowed. Upon the second vote of the matter, if two-thirds (2/3) of the elders vote “yes,” then the decision is “yes,” and the matter is settled.

Section 10. Officers of the Elder Body

The elders shall elect annually from its members a Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary.

- a. Chairman – The Chairman shall call and preside at all regular or special meetings of the Elder Body. The Senior Pastor may not serve as the Chairman of the Elder Body.
- b. Vice Chairman – The Vice Chairman shall call and preside at all regular or special meetings of the Elder Body in the absence of the Chairman.
- c. Secretary – The Secretary shall keep minutes of all meetings of the Elder Body.

ARTICLE VII. DEACONS

Section 1. Number of Deacons

The number of deacons serving on the active Deacon Body will be 28. The size of this body may be altered by a majority vote of the church members present at a regular or called Members' Meeting of the church for that purpose.

Section 2. Qualifications of Deacons

Because of the significance of this servant role and its representation of the church to the Christian and non-Christian community as the church we choose in accordance with Scripture (1 Timothy 3:10) to "test" the Deacon Body. A deacon candidate shall measure up to 1 Tim 3:8-13 & Acts 6:3 and be tested in accordance with the following criteria:

- a. Have a good/respectable reputation among the members of the church. (Acts 6:3 and 1 Timothy 3:8)
- b. Demonstrates a life of being full of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 6:3)
- c. Demonstrates wisdom as gained by knowledge of Scripture. (Acts 6:3)
- d. Demonstrates consistent Christian behavior among all people. (1 Timothy 3:8)
- e. Demonstrates a life free from addiction to controlling substances. (1 Timothy 3:8)
- f. Demonstrates integrity in financial matters. (1 Timothy 3:8)
- g. Does not deny the truths of Scripture in belief and behavior. (1 Timothy 3:9)
- h. Demonstrates support of pastoral leadership. (Acts 6: 3, 6)
- i. Demonstrates spiritual leadership at home. (1 Timothy 3:11-12)
- j. Demonstrates promotion of unity in the church. (Acts 6:1,7)

Section 3. Selection of Deacons

The active Deacon Body will consist of a four year rotation membership. Each deacon is therefore elected for a four year term. After this period of service ends, each person is rotated off the active Deacon Body for a period of at least one year. The annual terms of service extend from June through May.

At an appropriate time preceding the new deacon year, a church-wide nomination and election will be conducted to determine the new members of the active Deacon Body.

The Elder Body will select a Deacon Nominating Committee, a non-standing committee. The committee will consist of two elders, two deacons and two laypersons (non-deacons). The nominees for the committee will meet the criteria of the church Covenant.

The Elder Body will submit the approved nominees for the Deacon Nominating Committee to the church for approval.

The Deacon Nominating Committee will receive nominations from the church body and make nominations of their own. Each nominee will be screened by the Deacon Nominating Committee to confirm his qualifications and interest in serving as a deacon.

The committee will then present a list of all men who are qualified, and willing, to the church one month prior to the deacon election. The deacon election will take place at a called Members'

Meeting of the church. The number of deacons elected by the church is determined by the number of vacancies to fill that maintain an active Deacon Body of 28 men. Those men who receive the highest number of votes will fill the vacancies.

Upon approval by the church, those men not previously ordained in a Baptist church of like faith and order, shall be ordained.

Section 4. Officers of the Deacon Body

The Deacon Body will have, at a minimum, a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary of the Deacons as officers of the Deacon Body. Except in unusual circumstances, the Vice-Chairman will succeed the Chairman as Chairman of the Deacons.

Section 5. Deacon Review

A Deacon Review will be conducted annually within the fiscal year. It is important for confirmed deacons to show continued adherence to deacon qualifications. If a deacon is found “lacking” against these qualifications, then the deacon will be encouraged to repent and to correct his behavior so as to adhere to the biblical requirements for the office of deacon. If he refuses to repent and correct his behavior, the Testing Board will ask him to resign from the position of deacon. If he refuses to resign, then the Testing Board will present the matter before the church at a Members’ Meeting called for such purpose for the church to vote to remove the man from the office of Deacon. A majority vote is necessary to remove the deacon.

The Testing Board will consist of: Chairman of Deacons, Vice-Chairman of Deacons, Secretary of Deacons and one elder. The Testing Board will evaluate each deacon based on the Deacon Qualifications found in Article VII.2. (1 Timothy 3:8-13 Acts 6:3)

If a deacon resigns or is removed from the Deacon Body, he cannot be approved by the church to the Deacon Body for a period of two years. At the time of consideration for nomination he must be evaluated in the same manner as a new deacon.

ARTICLE VIII. CHURCH STAFF & OFFICERS

Section 1. Church Officers

The biblical offices of the New Testament Church are Pastors (also referred to as Elders and Overseers; 1 Timothy 3:1; 5:17) and Deacons. In addition, our Church recognizes the need for supplementary positions including Pastoral Staff, Directors of Ministry, Support Staff and Administrative and Legal Positions to carry out the daily ministries, administration, and legal matters of the church.

The Pastoral Staff consists of the Senior Pastor, Associate Pastor(s), and Assistant Pastor(s). In addition to oversight of delegated ministry, Pastoral Staff have the responsibility to teach and/or preach to the church congregation. Director(s) of Ministry will be non-pastoral staff who assist the Pastoral Staff with the ministries of the church.

All who serve as officers shall be members of the church and shall be “known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom” and “full of faith” (Acts 6:3, 5). Officers shall be approved by and serve at the discretion of the church. Officers shall be in agreement with and committed to the church’s purpose, beliefs, and covenant as stated in the Constitution and are ultimately accountable to the church body.

An individual may be ordained or licensed as a minister of the Gospel by the church after the candidate has met the qualifications for ordination or licensure. These qualifications may include, but are not limited to, education, experience, and training. The qualifications will be determined by the Senior Pastor.

Section 2. Senior Pastor

The Church affirms that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of the church. With the assistance of the Holy Spirit, the church shall call a qualified man to serve as its Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor shall be God’s under-shepherd and overseer of the church and shall apply, teach, and proclaim God’s Word in an unfettered manner, in order to nourish, strengthen, and guide the church. The Senior Pastor shall serve as an elder on the Elder Body. Thereby, he shall meet the qualifications of an elder and perform the responsibilities of an elder as stated in these bylaws. The Senior Pastor shall oversee and supervise directly or by delegation all church staff members.

- a. Selection Process – Should the position of Senior Pastor be vacated, the Elder Body shall appoint a Pastor Search Committee consisting of seven (7) members. The Pastor Search Committee shall consist of between two (2) to four (4) elders with the remaining committee members being non-elders. In order to avoid any conflicts of interest, real or perceived, non-elder church staff, church employees, and relatives of elders, staff, and employees shall be excluded from membership on the Pastor Search Committee. The Church may submit names of members to the Elder Body for consideration. The Elder Body shall present the Pastor Search Committee to the church for final approval. Upon approval of the recommended Pastor Search Committee, the approved Committee shall commence its functions. If the church does not approve the Elder Body’s recommendation for the Pastor Search Committee, the Elder Body will reevaluate the nominations and submit a Pastor Search Committee recommendation to the church body for approval. The Pastor Search Committee’s first action will be to select its own chairperson from among the seven approved committee members. After evaluation and prayerful consideration of potential candidates, the Pastor Search Committee (upon the approval of the Elder Body) will recommend to the congregation a candidate to serve in the role of Senior Pastor. The Church shall be given a time to consider the nominee which shall not be less than two weeks. After the time of consideration, the Elder Body shall call a special Members’ Meeting to present to the church the nominee for the purpose of a vote of affirmation. If the nominee is affirmed by a congregational vote of seventy-five percent, the man shall assume the office at an agreed upon date. If a nominee is not affirmed by the congregation, the Pastor Search Committee shall meet to discuss how to proceed.
- b. Breach or Impairment of Office – Believing that the person holding the office of Senior Pastor cannot be overseer of the church if he has breached the scriptural qualifications of the office of Senior Pastor, or is physically or mentally unable to uphold the office of Senior Pastor, or his leadership materially compromises the welfare or the Articles of Faith of the church, the Elder Body shall counsel the Senior Pastor if they believe the office of the

Senior Pastor has been impaired in accordance with Matthew 18:15-17 and I Timothy 5:19-20.

- c. **Termination** – The Senior Pastor shall serve the church for an indefinite term or until the relationship is terminated by:
- Death.
 - Resignation – the Senior Pastor shall give the church notice a minimum of two weeks prior to the effective date of his resignation.
 - Removal – If the Senior Pastor is determined by the Elder Body to no longer meet the qualifications and/or responsibilities of elder as stated in these bylaws, then the Elder Body shall call a special Members’ Meeting to consider the removal of the Senior Pastor. The moderator for this meeting shall be the Chairman of the Elders. An affirmative vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the church members present and voting is necessary to remove the Senior Pastor.

Section 3. Associate Pastor

The Church may select additional church staff members whose relationship to the Senior Pastor is that of an Associate Pastor. The Associate Pastor shall serve as an elder on the Elder Body. Thereby, he shall meet the qualifications of an elder and perform the responsibilities of an elder as stated in these bylaws along with his regular assigned duties. He shall assist the Senior Pastor in the performance of his regular duties.

- a. **Selection Process** – If the man is currently serving on the pastoral staff at the time of his consideration as an Associate Pastor, he will be selected as an elder through the same process as that of a lay elder in accordance with these bylaws. If the man is not currently serving on the church staff at the time of his consideration as an Associate Pastor, he will be selected by the same selection process as that of the Senior Pastor according to these bylaws (Article VIII.2.a).
- b. **Termination** – The Associate Pastor shall serve the church for an indefinite term or until the relationship is terminated by:
- Death.
 - Resignation – the Associate Pastor shall give the church notice a minimum of two weeks prior to the effective date of his resignation if he also resigning his position on the church staff. The Associate Pastor may resign his position as an elder of the church and remain on the church staff as an Assistant Pastor with the approval of the Elder Body.
 - Removal – If the Associate Pastor is determined by the Elder Body to no longer meet the qualifications of elder, then the Elder Body shall call a special Members’ Meeting to consider the removal of the Associate Pastor. The moderator for this meeting shall be the Chairman of the Elders. An affirmative vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the church members present and voting is necessary to remove the Associate Pastor.

Section 4. Assistant Pastor

The Church may create or dissolve Assistant Pastor positions to assist with the pastoral ministry upon the recommendation of the elders and the subsequent agreement of the majority of the church members present and voting on the question at any special called Members’ Meeting. An Assistant Pastor shall meet the standards found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and conform to the Articles of Faith of the church. Assistant Pastors shall assist the Elder Body in overseeing the ministries and programs

of the church, serve as an extension of their ministry to the church, and shall serve at the discretion of the Elder Body within the guidelines and job descriptions adopted by the Elder Body and the church.

- a. Selection Process – Assistant Pastor positions will be filled based upon the same selection process as that of the Senior Pastor according to these bylaws (Article VIII.2.a).
- b. Termination – An Assistant Pastor shall serve the church for an indefinite term or until the relationship is terminated by:
 - Death.
 - Resignation – An Assistant Pastor shall give the church notice a minimum of two weeks prior to the effective date of his resignation.
 - Removal – If an Assistant Pastor is determined by the Elder Body to no longer meet the qualifications of a minister of the church, then the Elder Body shall call a special Members’ Meeting to consider the removal of the minister. The moderator for this meeting shall be the Chairman of the Elders. An affirmative vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the church members present and voting is necessary to remove the minister.

Section 5. Directors of Ministry

The Elder Body may create or dissolve additional staff positions to assist with ministry. The Elder Body shall define the responsibilities for Directors of Ministry. The funding for paid Directors of Ministry must be approved by the church membership. Directors of Ministry will serve under the supervision of the Senior Pastor. Directors of Ministry shall exemplify godly character and conform to the Articles of Faith of the church. Directors of Ministry may be terminated at the discretion of the Elder Body for character or competence failures. Directors of Ministry may resign by submitting written notice to the elders.

Section 6. Support Staff

The Elder Body may create or dissolve additional staff positions to assist with administration or the care and upkeep of the church facilities. The Elder Body shall define the responsibilities of each Support Staff position. The funding for paid support staff positions must be approved by the church membership. Support Staff will serve under the supervision of the Senior Pastor. Support Staff members shall exemplify godly character. Support Staff may be terminated at the discretion of the Elder Body for character or competence failures. Support Staff members may resign by submitting written notice to the Elder Body.

Section 7. Administrative & Legal Positions

- a. Church Clerk(s) – The clerk(s) of the church shall be nominated by the church staff and approved by the church body. The clerk(s) of the church shall keep records of the minutes of all called and regular Member’s Meetings. The clerk(s) shall issue individual letters of dismissal of a Church member only by a majority vote in a regular Members’ Meeting. The clerk(s) will preserve on file all official reports and communications and give required notice of all meetings where notice is necessary as indicated in the bylaws. The clerk(s) shall be responsible for preparing the Annual Church Profile. To be eligible as a Church Clerk, a person must be in adherence to the church Covenant.
- b. Church Financial Administrator – The Financial Administrator shall receive and disburse all monies according to approved financial procedures; keep a current and itemized account of all receipts, disbursements, and fixed assets of the church; and render to the appropriate

committees and church staff itemized reports of the receipts and disbursements on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis. The Financial Administrator's books shall be reviewed by the Finance Committee (or its designee) annually or upon the resignation, termination, or death of the Financial Administrator. The Finance Committee or the Elder Body reserves the option to request a full audit (internal or external) when circumstances warrant such action. The Elder Body may request an internal audit upon the termination or resignation of the Financial Administrator. The Financial Administrator shall give assistance and advice on financial matters of the church. The Financial Administrator shall serve as an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Finance Committee.

- c. Trustees – Three Trustees, elected by the church to serve for such period of time as determined by the church, shall hold in trust all Church property. Upon approval by the church, the governing body, authorizing such action, the Trustees shall be empowered to affix their signatures to legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, rental of property, and other similar matters where the signatures of Trustees are required. Trustees are not a decision-making body. The Church agrees to indemnify the Trustees for any liability they may incur in their capacity as Trustees as a result of performing actions directed by the church.
- d. Attorney – The Elder Body shall engage the services of a qualified law firm or attorney as deemed necessary. Payment for legal services shall require approval by the Finance Committee.

ARTICLE IX. COMMITTEES, COUNCILS, & MINISTRY TEAMS

Section 1. Committees

- a. Formation of Committees – The Elder Body shall determine the need for, responsibilities of, and terms of committees. The recommendations for committees shall be presented to the church body for approval at a Members' Meeting.
- b. Function of Committees – Committees are responsible to assist the Elder Body with the administrative tasks of the church. All who serve as committee members shall serve at the discretion of and be accountable to the Elder Body and Church. Responsibilities and policies for each committee are presented in each committee's policies and procedures. Each committee is responsible for establishing and maintaining policies and procedures for that committee. Committee policies and procedures shall be approved by the church body at a Members' Meeting. Each committee chair shall hold a policy and procedure orientation meeting at the initial meeting after the beginning of the fiscal year. A majority of committee members must be present for committee action. Each standing committee chairperson (or designee) is responsible for presenting a committee report, oral or written, at each quarterly Members' Meeting. If there has not been any action since the last Members' Meeting, a report is not necessary. Any search committee formed to fill a pastoral staff vacancy will also be responsible for presenting a committee report at each quarterly Members' Meeting until the vacancy is filled.
- c. Selection Process of Committees – To be eligible to serve on a church committee, a person must be a member of the church and be in adherence to the Church Covenant. The Elder Body will submit nominees to serve as committee members to the church for approval. Committee members are elected on a rotating system whereby one third of the members

rotate off each year and one third are elected each year. Elders serve as ex-officio members of all committees and may sit as such at their discretion.

d. Types of Committees

1. **Standing Committees.** Standing Committees exist for an indefinite period of time. Standing committees shall include (but not be limited to): Finance, Pastoral Care, and Properties.
 - Finance Committee – The Finance Committee will promote the efficient and studied handling of the financial matters of the church. They shall aid in the compilation of the annual church budget and any other financial matters that the Elder Body delegates to their care.
 - Pastoral Care Committee – The Pastoral Care Committee shall, on behalf of the church, be vigilant in the watch care of the pastoral and church staff. They shall be responsible for initially establishing and annually reviewing the salary and benefit packages. They are to lead the church in the recognition of special occasions such as anniversaries, birthdays, etc. they are also to be diligent in seeking to meet any special need that should arise regarding the church staff.
 - Properties Committee – The Properties Committee is responsible to the church for all real property. This includes the usefulness, attractiveness, improvement, maintenance, and accountability of all real property.
2. **Special Committees.** Special Committees exist for a designated period of time and shall perform tasks solely in accordance with the duties and with the powers specifically delegated to the committee.

Section 2. Councils

To promote efficient handling of church matters, the Elder Body may appoint various councils from within its members, the staff, the deacons, and from the church at large. These councils shall perform tasks solely in accordance with the duties and with the powers specifically delegated by the Elder Body. Councils have no administrative or executive power. All councils shall exist for the period specified by the Elder Body. The general functions of any council are: (1) To bring considered recommendations to the body of elders concerning church matters; and, (2) To provide a wider base of counsel to the elders regarding church matters.

Section 3. Ministry Teams

Ministry teams are a group of volunteers called by God to serve this Church body and/or its prospects in a church-authorized ministry. Ministry teams are responsible for the ministry aspects of the church. A ministry team is a functional unit of direct involvement to accomplish the objectives of the church. Ministry team members are chosen because of a need for that particular ministry, individual desire to serve, individual gifts, and a willingness to train. Church members are encouraged to volunteer and participate in the various ministries of the church through ministry teams. Ministry team members do not serve on a rotation system. A staff member will oversee each Ministry team. Each ministry team may have a team coordinator.

ARTICLE X. CHURCH MEETINGS AND ASSEMBLIES

The Church will assemble faithfully to accomplish its mission (Hebrews 10:25). These meetings will include worship, teaching, ministry, fellowship, and business. We gather together to honor

God and accomplish His work. To do this requires our individual preparation in time with God, seeking to know Him, His will and His ways. We do this by being still before Him in prayer and reading His Word. Our assembling is our affirmation of God's authority in our lives individually and collectively and our desire to submit ourselves to the Father's will as Christ taught and demonstrated.

Section 1. Worship Services

- a. The Church shall meet regularly for worship each Sunday at hours to be established by a vote of the church body and at other such times as may be decided by the church. Any other activity or assembly of the church that furthers Christ's Kingdom may be held at any reasonable time or place.
- b. All worship services of the church will be under the direction of the Elder Body.
- c. The Elder Body may cancel or postpone any service for reasonable cause or for special events.
- d. This Church shall be open to all persons wishing to worship God and participate in the organizations of this Church without the necessity of those persons formally applying for church membership. However, such persons shall not be elected to teach any class, hold any office, or vote upon any matter coming before the church.

Section 2. Other Services and Assemblies

Other services and assemblies include, but are not limited to, funerals, weddings, and special events. Such services and assemblies shall be under the direction of the Elder Body or a designee approved by the elders. These services and assemblies shall be conducted in a manner that is consistent with a Christian worship service and in accordance with the Church's Articles of Faith.

Section 3. Members' Meetings

- a. Regular Members' Meetings
 1. Regular Members' Meetings shall be held quarterly. The Church shall conduct all necessary business only at the regular or special Members' Meetings.
 2. All Members' Meetings shall be presided over by an elder as moderator.
 3. The agenda for a regular Members' Meeting shall be set by the Elder Body.
- b. Special Members' Meetings
 1. The Church shall conduct special Members' Meetings for matters of unusual and important significance.
 2. The Church shall hold such special meetings of members when called by the Elder Body, or by petition of 3% of the active voting members of the church after the issue(s) sought to be addressed at the special meeting has been brought to the attention of and discussed with the Elder Body (Mathew 18:15-18).
 3. Only those matters that have been reasonably described in sufficient detail to fairly inform church members of the business to be conducted may be voted on at a special Members' Meeting.
 4. The agenda for a special Members' Meeting shall be set by the Elder Body.
 5. Notice of a special Members' Meeting shall be given in the Sunday morning worship service and the special Members' Meeting shall be held no sooner than the next regularly scheduled worship service.

6. Where practical, an agenda of such special Members' Meeting shall be published in the church bulletin and distributed to all members present at the Sunday morning worship service prior to the special Members' Meeting.
 7. When published notice is impractical, the subjects to be covered at the special Members' Meeting shall be announced during the Sunday morning worship service to all members present.
- c. Notice and Posting for Members' Meetings
1. Any business for the church, which requires approval by and through its members, shall be conducted on the church premises at a Members' Meeting called to order only after proper notice and posting has been issued.
 2. Notice is the oral or written publication of the date, time, and known items of business to be discussed at each Members' Meeting.
 3. Notice shall be given at least one week prior to a regular Members' Meeting.
 4. Notice of major items of business shall be printed in the church newsletter or the church bulletin the week before the meeting or by announcement in the services on the Sunday prior to the Members' Meeting.
- d. Members' Meeting Procedures
1. An elder shall be the moderator of all Members' Meetings, except as otherwise provided in these bylaws.
 2. In the conduct of Members' Meetings, informal, fair, and democratic procedure is preferred to legalistic formality whenever practical; but the rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the meetings in all cases to which they are applicable, and in which they are not inconsistent with the Articles of Incorporation and these bylaws.
 3. The Bible and these bylaws shall prevail if there is any conflict with Robert's Rules of Order.
 4. The moderator shall appoint a qualified person to serve as the parliamentarian for a Members' Meeting, if necessary.
 5. Prior to the members casting a vote on a matter, the recommendation of the Elder Body shall be presented orally or in writing to the church for consideration.
- e. Voting at Members' Meetings
1. The members present at any Members' Meeting shall constitute a quorum.
 2. Each voting member (ref. Article V.4.c) shall be entitled to one vote at any meeting where a quorum is present, and it shall require the votes of a majority of the members present to carry an issue except as otherwise specified in these bylaws.
 3. Absentee voting and proxy voting are not allowed on any vote in the church.
 4. All voting on items dealing with budget or budgetary changes, church personnel matters, and the approval or removal of elders, pastoral staff, and deacons will be by secret written ballot.
- f. Members' Meeting Minutes
1. The Church clerk shall ensure that minutes of all Members' Meetings are prepared and secured in a safe place.
 2. A copy of the minutes of each Members' Meeting shall be filed in the church office within thirty days after the meeting in which they are approved.

ARTICLE XI. CHURCH ORDINANCES

Section 1. Baptism

The Church may receive for baptism all persons who have received Jesus Christ as their Savior by personal faith, who profess Him publicly at any worship service, and who indicate a commitment to follow Christ as Lord. Baptism shall be by immersion in water with physical requirements being the only exception as determined by the Elder Body. An elder, or whomever the Elder Body shall authorize, shall administer baptism. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service of the church.

Section 2. Lord's Supper

The Church shall regularly (at least once each quarter) and faithfully observe the Scriptural ordinance of the Lord's Supper, led by an elder, as scheduled by the church. The Lord's Supper is for the spiritual edification of its membership and other believers.

ARTICLE XII. CHURCH FINANCES

Section 1. Budget

The Elder Body in consultation with the Finance Committee, shall prepare and submit to the church body for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by items the amount needed and sought for all expenses. The approved budget shall constitute the authorization for expenditures for the fiscal year in which it was approved. It is understood that membership in this Church body involves financial obligation to support the church budget and its ministries with regular giving. Offering envelopes will be provided for members' use.

Section 2. Accounting Procedures

All funds received for any and all purposes shall pass through the office of the church Financial Administrator and be properly recorded on the books of the church. A system of accounting that will adequately provide for the managing of all funds shall be the responsibility of the Finance Committee and the Elder Body as set forth in the Financial policies and procedures.

Section 3. Fiscal Year

The Church fiscal year shall begin on June 1st and end May 31st.

ARTICLE XIII. CHURCH OPERATIONS, POLICY MANUALS, & POSITIONAL PAPERS

Section 1. Policies and Procedures

The policies and procedures describe the lines of authority, responsibility, and operating procedures used by the church. Church policies and procedures may be reviewed annually by the Elder Body. All written policies and procedures may be viewed and/or obtained by any Church member upon request during regular business hours. A manual containing all policies and procedures shall be prepared and a copy maintained in the church office. Church members or Church organizations may suggest changes to the policies and procedures of the church by

discussing such changes with the Elder Body. The policies and procedures for the church and any material changes thereafter are subject to approval by the church body.

Section 2. Positional Papers

Positional papers may be written to articulate the church’s interpretation, application, or conviction on particular doctrines or topics. They are not on the same authoritative standard as the church’s Articles of Faith nor are they binding upon the conscience of individual church members. The Elder Body will write positional papers, as deemed necessary, and then submit the paper to the church for discussion and final approval.

ARTICLE XIV. INDEMNIFICATION

Section 1. Mandatory Indemnification

If a legal claim or criminal allegation is made against a person because he or she is or was an officer, employee, elder, deacon, or a member of a duly elected, appointed or constituted governing body, the church shall provide indemnification against liability and costs incurred in defending against the claim if the elders determine that the person acted (a) in good faith, (b) with the care an ordinarily prudent person in a similar position would exercise under similar circumstances, and (c) in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in the best interest of the church, and the person had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful.

Section 2. Permissive Indemnification

At the discretion of the elders, the church also may indemnify any person who acted in good faith and reasonably believed that his or her conduct was in the church’s best interest and not unlawful.

Section 3. Procedure

If a quorum of the elders is not available for an indemnification determination because of the number of elders seeking indemnification, or any other reason, the requisite determination may be made by a majority vote of the church at a special called members’ meeting for such purpose.