

CONSTITUTION OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF PLANO, TEXAS

Revised 2010

PREAMBLE

We declare and establish this Constitution to set forth, secure and preserve the principles of our faith. This Constitution will preserve the liberties of each Church member and the freedom of action of this body in relation to other churches.

ARTICLE I – NAME

This body shall be known as the First Baptist Church of Plano, Texas.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

We live to bring glory to God as we obey the Great Commandment: Loving God; as we live the Great Commitment: Serving Others; and as we fulfill the Great Commission: Sharing Jesus.

ARTICLE III – STATEMENT OF FAITH

We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired word of God and consider the Scriptures authoritative for our beliefs and practices. We affirm as our confession of faith “The Baptist Faith and Message” as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963.

ARTICLE IV – POLITY

The government of this Church is vested in the body of believers who compose it and the Church will be governed in accordance with this Constitution and the Church Bylaws. It 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. The Church is affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas, the Southern Baptist Convention, and the Collin Baptist Association. Any change in convention or association affiliation shall require approval at a business meeting by three-fourths of Church members present and voting at a meeting called in accordance with the Bylaws.

ARTICLE V – AMENDMENTS

Changes in the Constitution may be made at any business meeting of the Church, provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous business meeting. Notice of the meeting in which the amendment is to be considered shall be mailed to Church members not less than thirty days prior to the meeting, together with a copy of the proposed amendment. Amendments to the constitution shall be adopted by an affirmative vote of three-fourths of Church members present and voting.

First Baptist Church of Plano, Texas

Bylaws

Revised 2010

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First Baptist Church of Plano, Texas

Bylaws

Part 1

Church Name and Membership

This part identifies our Church and defines Membership.

- Article 1. Name, Principal Office, and Non-Profit Status
- Article 2. Membership

First Baptist Church of Plano, Texas
Bylaws

Article 1 – Name, Principal Office, and Non-Profit Status

1.1. Name – The name of this church shall be: First Baptist Church of Plano, Texas, and it shall be referred to in these Bylaws as the "Church".

1.2. Principal Office – The address of the principal office of this Church shall be: 1300 East 15th Street, Plano, Texas, 75074. The Church shall comply with all requirements of the state of Texas in designating a principal office and registered agent for service.

1.3. Non-Profit Status – This Church is not organized for profit, and has been recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a non-profit, tax-exempt institution under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Article 2 – Membership

2.1. Qualifications – The membership of this Church shall consist of persons who have received Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord, who have obeyed Him in the scriptural ordinance of believer's baptism by immersion and who have been received into membership by a majority of Church members present and voting in a regular business meeting.

2.2. Reception of Members – Any person may be presented to the Church as a candidate for membership as follows:

2.2.1. On profession of faith in Christ and acknowledgement of His Lordship through baptism by immersion;

2.2.2. By letter of commendation from another Baptist church;

2.2.3. By statement of prior conversion experience and believer's baptism in a congregation of similar beliefs;

2.2.4. By proxy when physically unable to attend; or

2.2.5. By restoration after evidence of repentance and reformation has been presented to the Deacon Council and on its recommendation to the Church.

2.2.6. In the event of any unusual questions concerning the presentation of any candidate, the pastor will confer with the Deacon Council officers before presenting that person to the Church for membership.

2.3. Duties – Members are expected to join wholeheartedly in the Church’s mission of bringing glory to God through loving God, serving others, and sharing Jesus. Members are expected to be faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian life, to regularly attend the services of the Church, to provide financial support for the church and its causes, and upon moving to another community, to unite as soon as practicable with another Baptist church.

2.4. Rights – Each member shall be entitled to an equal voice and vote in the business meetings of the Church.

2.5. Termination – Membership in this Church shall be terminated as follows:

2.5.1. By the death of the member.

2.5.2. By the Church granting, on proper request, a letter of commendation to another Baptist church.

2.5.3. By dismissal upon a majority of the members present and voting at a regular or special business meeting, after recommendation to the Church by the Deacon Council. The Church retains its sovereign right to withdraw membership from any person at its sole discretion. When a member persists in conduct deemed inconsistent with the Christian faith, and after effort has been exercised to restore that person to a Christian walk, it shall be the duty of the Deacon Council to recommend to the Church that fellowship be withdrawn from such a member. The Church shall understand that such discipline is not considered to be punitive but redemptive, and shall make continued efforts to reach and restore such a person. Upon restoration to a Christian walk, such a person may be presented to the Church by the Deacon Council for reception into membership.

2.5.4. By voluntary withdrawal of the member.

2.6. Membership Records – Church membership records shall be maintained by a designated Church employee under the supervision of the minister who has responsibility for Christian education. The designated employee shall be authorized to certify membership status for voting purposes. Any member whose name is on the membership roll shall be eligible to vote in Church business meetings.

Part 2

Church Leadership

This part describes how the Church delegates authority and responsibilities.

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- Article 4. Pastor
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- Article 8. Clerk and Assistant
- Article 9. Treasurer and Assistant
- Article 10. Trustees
- Article 11. Church Staff and Employees

Article 3 – Church Leadership

3.1. Leadership – Certain functions of this Church shall be performed through Church officers, the Church Council, standing committees, special committees and ministry teams.

3.2. Qualifications – All Church officers, members of committees and members of ministry teams shall be actively participating Church members, regular in attendance and supporters of the Church program. An interim pastor shall be exempt from the membership qualification.

3.3. Officers and Assistants – The scriptural officers of this Church shall be pastor and deacons. The other officers of this Church shall be clerk, treasurer, assistant clerk, assistant treasurer and trustees.

Article 4 – Pastor

4.1. Selection and Call – A pastor shall be selected and called by the Church. When a vacancy occurs, the Deacon Council shall select a pastor search committee from the Church membership and recommend to the Church seven members who are active in major Church organizations and representative of the Church membership. Staff members and their spouses may not serve on this committee nor may more than one person from any Church family. The chair and vice-chair of the Pastor Search Committee shall be elected by the committee. After election by the Church, the committee shall endeavor prayerfully to select a prospective pastor. Only candidates selected by the Pastor Search Committee shall be eligible for consideration for the office of pastor. After making a selection, the committee shall submit its recommendation to the Deacon Council, which will give notice of the meeting in accordance with the provisions of Article 13, Section 3.1, and will set aside a Sunday morning worship service during which the prospective pastor will conduct the service. The recommendation to call a pastor must be approved by an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those members present and voting in the special Church business meeting.

4.2. Duties – The pastor shall lead the Church and direct in the coordination of its program and perform the other duties pertaining to the office as set forth in the Word of God. Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, the pastor shall act as moderator of the Church. The pastor shall serve, or appoint a designee to serve, as an ex-officio member of each committee and organization of the Church.

4.3. Termination – The pastor shall serve until the relationship between the Church and the pastor is terminated. The pastor may terminate the relationship by giving two weeks written notice to the Church. The Church may terminate the relationship by a majority of the members present and voting at a Church business meeting called by the Deacon Council, which shall follow approval of such action by both the Personnel Committee and the Deacon Council. Church members shall be informed of the time, place and purpose of the called meeting in accordance with the provisions of Article 13, Section 3.1. of these Bylaws.

4.4. Pulpit Vacancy – When the Church is without a pastor, the Church Council shall coordinate the Church staff in carrying out the programs of the Church. The Deacon Council shall provide for the pulpit supply or recommend to the Church the selection of an interim pastor.

Article 5 – Deacons

5.1. Purpose – Deacons shall be elected by the Church to assist the pastor in the work of the Church. Spiritual leadership and commitment to service shall be distinguishing characteristics of those serving as deacons. Important matters shall be presented to and discussed with the Deacon Council for advice and clarification before presentation to the Church.

5.2. Qualifications:

5.2.1. Deacons shall meet the scriptural qualifications stated in Acts 6:1–6 and 1 Timothy 3:8–13. Jesus Himself set the example of service to which deacons should aspire, in accordance with Mark 10:45.

5.2.2. Deacons should demonstrate support of Church programs through consistent attendance of worship, Bible study and other meetings of the congregation, as well as through tithing and accepting leadership roles in the Church.

5.2.3. Deacons should have a good reputation and demonstrate spiritual and emotional maturity in their conduct.

5.2.4. Any member to be considered for the office of deacon shall have been a professed and practicing Christian for at least five years, a member of the Church for at least one year prior to election and shall not be less than twenty-five years of age.

5.2.5. Once elected to the deacon body, a deacon shall retain deacon status so long as Church membership is maintained, unless the deacon requests removal or the deacon is removed for just cause by a vote of two-thirds of the Deacon Council.

5.3. Structure:

5.3.1 The categories of deacons are: (a) those currently serving on the Deacon Council; (b) those who are currently inactive following three years of service on the Deacon Council; (c) those who are inactive for other reasons; and (d) deacons emeritus.

5.3.2. The Deacon Council is the active and functional body of deacons elected by the Church for current ministry.

5.3.3. The pastor and Deacon Council officers shall determine jointly the number of deacons needed to carry out the responsibilities of the Deacon Council. The number may vary from year to year, depending on the needs of the Church.

5.3.4. The term of office for deacons shall be three years. The annual service period shall be January through December. When deacons complete a three year term of service, they shall rotate off the Deacon Council for a full one year period. At the conclusion of the one year period, each deacon shall return to active service on the Deacon Council, unless the deacon chooses to remain inactive. Replacement of vacancies occurring in the Deacon Council within the service year shall be deferred until the next deacon nomination cycle.

5.3.5. Regular meetings of the Deacon Council shall precede regular Church business meetings. Any variation from this schedule shall be determined by the pastor and the Deacon Council officers. Special meetings of the Deacon Council may be called by any two of the following: pastor, Deacon Council chair, or Deacon Council vice-chair, by giving seven days prior notice.

5.3.6. Deacon Council officers shall be the chair and vice-chair, and such other officers as the council may determine to be necessary to enable its ministry and function. Each year, the Deacon Council shall elect as vice-chair a deacon who is serving the second year of the three year term. The vice-chair shall succeed the chair for the third year of the term. Should the chair become vacant with more than six months of the term remaining, a new chair shall be elected from the deacons who are in the third year of their term. Should a vacancy occur with less than six months of the term remaining, the vice-chair shall assume the chair, and a new vice-chair shall be elected, with both serving the balance of the vacated term in addition to their regular term.

5.4. Deacon emeritus is an honorary designation for deacons of maturity who have distinguished themselves in service to the Church and who have been elected to this honor by the Church.

5.4.1. A committee, composed of the chair and vice-chair of the Deacon Council and the pastor, shall nominate deacons to the status of deacon emeritus. The committee shall be chaired by the Deacon Council vice-chair. The committee shall determine that each nominee is willing to be elected to this status. The recommendation shall be presented for Church action in the same meeting in which deacons are elected.

5.4.2. Deacons who (a) are at least seventy years of age, or who have become disabled, (b) have completed a minimum of twelve years of service on the Deacon Council of the Church, (c) are no longer able to render active service and (d) continue to exhibit the characteristics of deaconship, shall be eligible for nomination.

Article 6 – Church Council

6.1. Members – The Church Council shall be composed of the pastor, Deacon Council chair, Stewardship/Finance Committee chair, Personnel Committee chair, Missions Committee chair, Minister of Education (or equivalent), and Minister of Music (or equivalent).

6.2. Church Council Officers – The chair of the Church Council shall be the pastor. The vice-

chair of the Church Council shall be the Deacon Council chair. No two positions among those comprising the Church Council shall be held by the same person. Not more than one member of the same immediate family shall serve on the Church Council at the same time.

6.3. Duties – The duties of the Church Council are to:

6.3.1. Lead the Church to adopt and implement a continuous strategic planning process.

6.3.2. Evaluate progress of Church programs.

6.3.3. Approve new Church organizations and Bible study groups.

6.3.4. Recommend establishment of new committees and dissolution of existing committees.

6.3.5. Prepare mission statements and job descriptions for new committees and maintain and revise mission statements and job descriptions for existing committees.

6.3.6. Nominate members of the Church Nominating Committee and special committees. Members of the Church Council and their immediate family members shall not be eligible for nomination.

6.3.7. Coordinate the Church staff in carrying out the programs of the Church when the pulpit is vacant.

6.3.8. Determine when regular services shall be canceled, except for weather, and when special services will be held.

6.3.9. Select ministry services to be performed by ministry teams.

6.3.10. Recommend Church policy revisions, and approve guidelines and procedures after verifying conformance to policy.

6.3.11. Provide oversight for administrative matters of the Church, including but not limited to: (a) arranging for periodic review of the Church's financial controls by a certified public accounting firm, (b) choosing the time when the Church Audit Committee shall conduct its review, (c) evaluating and approving acceptance of non-cash gifts to the Church, and (d) periodically assessing the adequacy of the Church's fidelity bond.

6.4. Meetings and Quorum – The Church Council shall meet at least quarterly and more often upon call by the council's chair. The vice-chair may call meetings if the council chair position is vacant. A quorum of the Church Council consists of more than fifty percent of the currently filled positions. Action by the Church Council must be supported by a majority of currently filled positions.

Article 7 – Committees and Ministry Teams

7.1. Types – The Church has two types of committees. Standing committees are ongoing committees that are authorized to provide direction and assistance in carrying out the usual business of the Church. Special committees are formed for a single purpose and are automatically dismissed when their stated purpose is completed. Ministry teams provide regular specific services to the Church and staff.

7.2. Limitations – Not more than one immediate family member shall serve on the same committee at the same time. For purposes of these Bylaws, immediate family shall mean husband/wife, parent/child, grandparent/grandchild, sister/brother, aunt/uncle, nephew/niece and in-laws. Ministry teams shall not be subject to this limitation.

7.3. Standing Committees:

7.3.1. The standing committees of the Church shall be the Church Nominating Committee, Benevolence Committee, Deacon Nominating Committee, Audit Committee, Missions Committee, Personnel Committee, Stewardship/Finance Committee and such other committees as the Church considers necessary to carry out its purpose.

7.3.2. The pastor or the pastor's designee shall serve as an ex-officio member of each committee.

7.3.3. Unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws, these guidelines shall be followed:

7.3.3.1. All standing committees shall be elected by the Church upon recommendation of the Church Nominating Committee. Members of the Church Nominating Committee and their immediate family members shall not be eligible for recommendation as committee members.

7.3.3.2. The Church Nominating Committee shall consist of six members. Each member shall serve a three year term, with two members elected each year. The Church Council shall recommend members of the Church Nominating Committee to the Church for election. The Church Council shall select, annually, one of the Church Nominating Committee members to serve as committee chair, who will be recommended to the Church for approval.

7.3.3.3. Standing committee members shall serve a three year term, with one-third of the members elected each year. The chair of each committee shall be recommended by the Church Nominating Committee and elected by a majority of the Church members present and voting at a regular business meeting. Mid-term vacancies may be filled by recommendation of the Church Nominating Committee and approval by a majority of Church members present and voting at a regular or special business meeting.

7.3.3.4. Committees shall serve annual terms from April through March.

7.3.3.5. Members shall serve on only one standing committee at a time.

7.3.3.6. Members shall not succeed themselves, except when they have been elected previously to an unexpired term of less than two years.

7.3.3.7. A committee quorum shall consist of a majority of the committee members.

7.3.3.8. Committee actions shall be approved by vote of a majority of the committee members present.

7.3.3.9. Committee proceedings shall be conducted in conformity with parliamentary procedures prescribed by the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

7.3.3.10. Committees shall keep accurate minutes of each meeting and shall provide a copy to the Church office to be filed.

7.3.4. Committee Manual – The Church shall maintain a church committee manual which includes the mission statement and job description for each standing committee.

7.3.5. Revisions – Mission statements and committee job descriptions shall be revised for any committee, when necessary, by the Church Council, except for the Deacon Nominating Committee, which is described in Article 7, Section 4 of these Bylaws.

7.3.6. Copies – The Church Nominating Committee shall provide each newly elected committee member with a copy of the mission statement and job description applicable to the committee.

7.4. Deacon Nominating Committee – The Deacon Nominating Committee shall recommend to the Church those members it has selected for election to the office of deacon.

7.4.1. The Deacon Nominating Committee shall consist of six members; each member shall have been a member of the Church for at least thirty-six months and shall be reasonably familiar with the Church membership. Not more than three members may be currently on the Deacon Council. Members shall serve a three year term, with two members elected each year by the Church. The Church Nominating Committee is responsible for recommending new members to the Deacon Nominating Committee annually. The Church Nominating Committee shall select the chair and secretary of the Deacon Nominating Committee, and the secretary shall succeed the chair the following year.

7.4.2. The pastor and Deacon Council officers shall provide the Deacon Nominating Committee with the following: (a) the number of deacons required for the Deacon Council as provided in Article 5, Section 3.3.; (b) the number of active deacons who will remain active during the upcoming year; (c) a list of those deacons scheduled for return to active service; and (d) a list of deacons inactive for other reasons.

7.4.3. The Deacon Nominating Committee shall contact the deacons on the list of those scheduled to return to active service, to confirm their intentions. The Deacon Nominating Committee may contact other inactive deacons to determine their willingness to be nominated to return to active service. The number of deacons required for the Deacon Council shall be compared with the sum of (a) the number of active deacons who intend to continue service for the following year, and (b) the number of deacons rotating back to active service. The difference will be the estimated number of additional deacons to be elected.

7.4.4. The Deacon Nominating Committee shall inform the Church through Church publications and announcements when nominations for the office of deacon are needed. The Deacon Nominating Committee shall make nomination forms available, which shall include a statement of deacon qualifications. Church members shall make recommendations by listing the names of their nominees and signing the form.

7.4.5. The Deacon Nominating Committee shall give priority consideration to those receiving the most nominations; however, it shall have discretion to use other findings and its judgment in selecting the persons to be presented to the Church. Deacon Nominating Committee members and members of their immediate families shall not be eligible for nomination as deacons.

7.4.6. After the initial list of nominees has been compiled, the list of prospective nominees shall be forwarded to the pastor for review and counsel. The committee shall verify, to the best of its ability, that each nominee meets the qualifications for the office of deacon.

7.4.7. The remaining candidates shall be contacted personally by a member of the Deacon Nominating Committee, who shall inform them they are being considered for the office of deacon and shall verify their willingness to serve.

7.4.8. Those candidates who express a willingness to serve shall be provided a questionnaire, designed by the Deacon Nominating Committee to provide practical information and insights into the candidates' qualifications and background.

7.4.9. The Deacon Nominating Committee shall review the questionnaires and other pertinent information and prayerfully select the nominees to be presented to the Church.

7.4.10. The final report of the committee shall be made available to the Church through publications and announcements at least one week prior to the business meeting when the Church will vote to elect new deacons. All elected deacons, who have not been previously ordained, shall be ordained by the Church as quickly as practicable, in an ordination service planned by the pastor, in counsel with the Deacon Council officers.

7.5. Special Committees – Each special committee shall be appointed to serve until its purpose is accomplished or until the Church terminates such appointment.

7.5.1. Duties – The duties of each special committee shall be limited in scope to those authorized by the Church upon the formation of the special committee.

7.5.2. Creation – The Church Council shall recommend the creation of special committees as it deems necessary. The Church Council shall select the members of special committees, designating one as committee chair, and shall recommend them to the Church for election.

7.6. Ministry Teams – Ministry teams shall be used by the Church to perform selected ministry services, as determined by the Church Council.

7.6.1. Examples of Ministry Teams are: Audio, Greeters, Ushers, Baptism, and Lord's Supper Teams.

7.6.2. Teams shall be subject to the authority of the Church and each team shall be guided by the pastor or a staff member designated by the pastor.

7.6.3. Teams may be formed at any time and may exist for a short, fixed duration or for a continuing, long-term ministry.

7.6.4. Teams shall be dissolved when their ministry function is completed.

7.6.5. Teams shall be staffed by volunteers recruited by the pastor or designated staff member, or by team members designated by the pastor or designated staff member.

7.6.6. Team members shall not be elected by the Church, but shall be members of the Church.

7.6.7. The number of members for each ministry team shall be determined by the pastor or designated staff member.

7.6.8. Team members shall not be subject to term limits.

Article 8 – Clerk and Assistant

8.1. Election and Term of Office – The church clerk and the assistant church clerk shall be elected annually by the Church, after nomination by the Church Nominating Committee, to a one year term from April through March.

8.2. Duties – The clerk shall keep a careful and correct record of all official acts of the Church and shall make regular reports to the Church. Minutes recorded by the clerk of each business meeting of the Church shall be presented for consideration at the following regular business meeting. Approval of such minutes shall establish them as the official church record.

8.3. Assistant Clerk – The assistant clerk shall act in the absence of the Clerk.

8.4. Vacancy – If the clerk or assistant clerk position becomes vacant, the Church Nominating Committee shall nominate a replacement for immediate election.

Article 9 – Treasurer and Assistant

9.1. Election and Term of Office – The treasurer and assistant treasurer shall be elected annually by the Church, after nomination by the Church Nominating Committee, to a one year term from April through March.

9.2. Duties – The treasurer shall keep a full and faithful account of all monies received and paid out, specifying for what purpose, and shall submit a report in writing at the regular business meetings of the Church.

9.3. Assistant Treasurer – The assistant treasurer shall act in the absence of the treasurer.

9.4. Vacancy – If the treasurer or assistant treasurer position becomes vacant, the Church Nominating Committee shall nominate a replacement for immediate election.

Article 10 – Trustees

10.1. Number, Election and Term – Six members of the Church shall be elected by the Church as trustees after nomination by the Church Nominating Committee. Each trustee shall serve a term of three years. The annual service period shall be April through March. The terms of two trustees shall expire each year, and their positions shall be filled by election. No trustee whose term expires shall be eligible for reelection until one year shall have passed, provided, however, any trustee serving an unexpired term of less than one year of a trustee who was regularly elected shall be eligible to succeed himself/herself.

10.2. Duties – Trustees are elected by the Church to conduct business on behalf of the Church as authorized by its membership. Each matter of trustee action shall have been determined by majority vote of the Church members present and voting at a regular or special business meeting. Trustees are authorized to act for and on behalf of the Church in the execution, acknowledgment, and delivery of all legal instruments including, but not limited to, conveyances, bills of sale, deeds of trust, notes, and mortgages. Execution by any three of the six elected trustees shall be sufficient to legally bind the Church. The Church shall indemnify trustees for any claims arising from their actions in performing the duties of trustees described in the Bylaws.

10.3. Vacancy – If a trustee position becomes vacant, the Church Nominating Committee shall nominate a replacement for election as soon as practicable.

Article 11 – Church Staff and Employees

11.1. Staff – The Church staff shall include the pastor and ministerial staff who are called by the Church on recommendation of a special committee. All members of the church staff shall be members of the Church unless the Church shall vote otherwise.

11.2. Other Personnel – Administrative and support personnel and other employees of the Church shall be employed with the approval of the Personnel Committee. There shall be a written job description for each position.

11.3. Termination – The relationship between the Church and its employees, including ministerial staff, may be dissolved (a) by the employee giving two weeks written notice, or (b) by the Church, through action of the Personnel Committee.

11.4. At-Will Status – The pastor, ministerial staff and all Church employees shall serve at-will. No committee, minister, manager, supervisor, or representative shall have the authority to enter into any agreement, or to make any written or oral promise, agreement or commitment, guaranteeing employment for a specific period of time, other than as authorized in these Bylaws.

Part 3

Church Function

This part explains the processes by which the Church fulfills its purpose.

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Article 12 – Church Organizations

12.1. Initiation and implementation of the Church's ministries and programs are the responsibility of the ministerial staff and Church committees. No individual or group shall form, organize or institute any organization or Bible teaching ministry within the Church without the prior express approval of the Church Council.

Article 13 – Meetings

13.1. Worship Services – Public worship services ordinarily shall be held each Sunday morning and evening, and a midweek service ordinarily shall be held on Wednesday evening of each week. The Church Council shall determine when services will be canceled, except for cancellations due to weather emergencies. The pastor and ministerial staff will determine weather emergency cancellations. The Church Council shall determine when special services will be held. Bible study shall be conducted, customarily, each Sunday morning. The program of the Church and its regular worship and special religious services shall take precedence over any and all outside meetings and programs.

13.2. Regular Business Meetings – Regular business meetings of the Church shall be held on the Church premises, ordinarily at the worship service on the Sunday evening following the meeting of the Deacon Council. Meetings shall be held monthly, except in July and December.

13.3. Special Business Meetings – Special business meetings of the Church may be called by the pastor, the chair of the Deacon Council, or by a majority of the Deacon Council.

13.3.1. Notices – Unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws, seven days notice of special business meetings shall be given in writing and mailed to the Church membership three days prior to the beginning of the required notice period. The notice shall specify the matter to be considered and the time and date of the special meeting.

13.3.2. Meeting Place – All special business meetings of the Church shall be held on the Church premises at the appointed time of a regular public worship service or midweek service of the Church.

13.4. Business Matters – Matters to be acted upon at regular or special business meetings of the Church shall first have been considered and recommended by the Church Council or the appropriate Church committee. Motions from the floor, which have not been considered or recommended by the Church Council or the appropriate Church committee, may, at the discretion of the moderator, be referred to the Church Council or appropriate Church committee for consideration. The moderator shall have the prerogative to initiate actions at any regular business meeting.

13.5. Quorum – For the transaction of business at any regular or special business meeting of the Church, a quorum shall consist of those members present, unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws.

13.6. Voting – Unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws, all actions by the Church shall be by vote of a majority of the Church members present and voting at any regular or special business meeting. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted.

13.7. Rules of Order – All business meetings of the Church shall be conducted in conformity with the usual parliamentary procedure as set forth in the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

13.8. Moderator – The Pastor shall serve as the moderator of Church business meetings. In the event of the pastor's absence, or by the pastor's choosing, the pastor may appoint the Deacon Council chair or a member of the ministerial staff as acting moderator. If the pulpit is vacant, the Deacon Council chair shall act as moderator.

Article 14 – Ordinances

14.1. Designated – The ordinances of the Church, as set forth in the New Testament, are baptism and the Lord's Supper.

14.2. Baptism – The ordinance of baptism shall be by immersion of the professed believer in water in obedience to the command of Christ. Only the pastor, or the pastor's designee, shall administer the ordinance.

14.3. Lord's Supper – The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed in accordance with 1 Corinthians 11 at a regular worship service as designated by the pastor or, in the pastor's absence, another member of the church staff. The pastor, or the pastor's designee, shall preside at the table and shall be assisted by the Deacon Council.

Article 15 – Church Policies, Guidelines and Procedures

15.1. Policies – The Church shall maintain written policies governing all aspects of its affairs, including but not limited to, handling of funds, employment, use of facilities, and child protection. Policies are the general principles by which the Church manages itself. The Church Council shall review and approve proposed revisions to policies before recommending them to the Church for approval.

15.2. Guidelines and Procedures – Written guidelines and procedures shall be maintained and followed in the administration of Church business and related matters. Guidelines are administrative instructions developed to carry out the policies of the Church. Procedures are standard, detailed steps that describe how to perform specific tasks.

15.3. Approval – Guidelines and procedures shall be approved by the Church Council, after verification that they conform to policies approved by the Church.

Article 16 – Church Finances

16.1. Fiscal Year – For fiscal purposes, the Church year shall be from January 1 through December 31.

16.2. Tithes and Offerings – The work of the Church shall be supported by tithes and offerings. Members shall be encouraged to give to meet the financial needs of the Church.

16.3. Fee Programs – Some ministries of the church, including the Weekday School, the Mothers' Day Out Program, and use of the Church for weddings, shall be provided on the basis of user fees. Such fees shall be used to offset related expenses.

16.4. Designated Contributions – The Church shall accept contributions designated for use in missions, benevolence, Church facilities, equipment and other Church programs. Such contributions shall be used in compliance with the desires stated at the time of the contribution, in writing, to the extent practicable, within limitations imposed by the Internal Revenue Code.

16.5. Non-Cash Gifts – Acceptance of non-cash gifts to the Church, such as stocks, bonds, automobiles and real estate, shall require an affirmative vote of the Church Council, after it has taken reasonable measures to ensure the donor has proper title to the property and that such property does not present an environmental hazard or other liability which would detrimentally affect the Church. Upon the acceptance of such gifts, the staff member responsible for Church finances shall be responsible for liquidating such property for cash, at market value, as quickly as practicable.

16.6. Receipts and Disbursements – All tithes, offerings, fees, contributions and other funds received by the Church shall be deposited into Church bank accounts. All receipts and disbursements shall be accounted for in keeping with approved policies and procedures.

16.7. Fidelity Bond – The Church shall maintain a fidelity bond covering employees and officers of the Church, in an amount that is sufficient, in the opinion of the Church Council, to adequately protect the Church.

16.8. Budget – The Church shall operate on a budget proposed by the Stewardship/Finance Committee and approved by the Church.

16.9. Inspection of Records – All books, records, and accounts of the Church, except contributions, pledges and commitments, shall be open to inspection during normal business hours by any member of the Church upon request to the staff member responsible for Church finances. Records of contributions, pledges and commitments shall be maintained by a designated church employee under the supervision of the staff member responsible for Church finances, and such records shall be kept strictly confidential and shall not be made available to any other person.

16.10. Financial Review – The Church Council shall arrange for a review of the Church’s internal financial controls and cash receipts and disbursements at least once every four years, by a certified public accounting firm of whose personnel none are Church members.

16.11. Audit Committee – The Church Audit Committee shall examine the Church’s cash receipts and disbursements, and compliance with financial control procedures in each year that an outside review is not performed. The examination shall be conducted at a time chosen by the Church Council and shall be conducted in compliance with procedures approved by the Church Council. The Audit Committee shall prepare a written report of its findings and present it to the Church Council.

Article 17 – Cooperation

17.1. Scope – The Church shall cooperate voluntarily with other churches through conventions, associations, and the like, organized for and devoted to the propagation of the gospel, religious education, healing of the sick, benevolence, and other efforts for advancing the Kingdom of God.

17.2. Method – Such cooperation may be manifested by:

17.2.1. Contributing money through the regular treasuries of such organizations or directly to the causes fostered by them.

17.2.2. Electing and sending messengers to participate in their deliberations.

17.2.3. Making available the services of its pastor and members when invited to do so as officers and members of boards, committees and the like.

17.2.4. Adopting at a regular business meeting, if the Church deems proper, such recommendations or actions as may have been made or taken by such convention, association, or like organization.

17.2.5. Adopting any resolution needed to inform any organization with which we cooperate of concerns and interests that we consider vital.

17.3. Sovereignty – This Church may cooperate with other churches, denominations, and institutions in the promotion of moral, benevolent, and religious causes. In such cooperation, however, this Church shall retain its full independence of action and government and shall not compromise any of its doctrine or surrender any of its prerogatives, power, or sovereignty.

Article 18 – Licensing and Ordaining

18.1. Licensing – The Church reserves the right to license to the work of the ministry any person who expresses a sense of God’s call and exhibits an appropriate lifestyle of devotion to Christ and exercises ministry gifts. After investigation and recommendation by the pastor and Deacon

Council, the affirmative vote of the majority of the members present and voting at any regular business meeting confirms the license of the candidate to the gospel ministry.

18.2. Ordaining – When the Church or a church of like faith and order shall call as minister a person affiliated with this Church who possesses scriptural qualifications for ordination to the work of the gospel ministry and shall request ordination in writing, the pastor may recommend that the Deacon Council consider such a request. If the Deacon Council approves such a request, the pastor shall assemble an ordaining council of ordained ministers of the gospel of like faith and order, all of whom shall participate in the examination of the candidate before recommending that the Church vote to confer ordination. Upon an affirmative vote of a majority of the members present and voting at a business meeting of the Church, the Ordaining Council and the Deacon Council shall participate in the ceremony of ordaining such person to the gospel ministry in the name of and in the presence of the Church.

Article 19 – Amendment

19.1. These Bylaws may be amended by a vote of three-fourths of the members present and voting at a regular or special business meeting of the Church. Notice of any recommendation to amend the Bylaws must be given thirty days prior to the business meeting in which the amendment motion is introduced.

Article 20 – Dissolution

20.1. Upon dissolution of the corporation, the Church shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all liabilities of the corporation, dispose of all of the assets of the corporation to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, education or religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Church shall determine by a majority of the members present and voting at a regular or special business meeting.