



# Constitution & Bylaws



# CONSTITUTION

## PREAMBLE

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

## I. NAME

This body shall be known as New Beginnings Baptist Church. Located at 600 George Richey Road, Longview, Gregg County, Texas 75604 (at the intersection of George Richey Road and Remington Trail); it was founded June 15, 1983 and incorporated under the laws of the State of Texas March 27, 1984.

## II. PURPOSE

**To love God, love others, serve the world.**

We will accomplish this through worshiping, serving, and glorifying God; exalting Jesus Christ as the Supreme Lord and Head of the church; fellowshiping with and building up believers in the faith as set forth in the scriptures; winning the lost and erring to Christ; and spreading the message of salvation at home and abroad.

## III. STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired, inerrant Word of God and the basis for our beliefs. As its doctrinal statement, this church subscribes to the "Baptist Faith and Message" as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963. We voluntarily band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind. The Ordinances of the church are Believer's Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

## IV. CHURCH COVENANT

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

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

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances, to walk circumspectly in the world; to be

just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale of and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to use our influence to combat the abuse of drugs and spread of pornography; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

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

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

## **V. GOVERNMENT**

This Church shall be governed by and with the consent of its members, each of whom shall have equal right as to voice and vote, without preference one over another, with the exception of Article I, Section 3.2. It is subject to control by no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation, insofar as is practical, with the Southern Baptist Convention, Baptist General Convention of Texas, and the Gregg Baptist Association. If at any time New Beginnings Baptist Church feels called to leave one of these associations due to the association(s) movement away from scripture, it may do so with a two-thirds majority vote of the members present in a special called business meeting. If at any time New Beginnings Baptist Church feels called to join another association due to the association aligning with scripture and the goals of this church it may do so with a three-fourths vote of the members present in a special called business meeting.

# BYLAWS

## ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP

### SECTION 1. General

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

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership. The membership shall be composed of those names on the church membership roll in the church office.

### SECTION 2. Candidacy

Any person may offer himself as a candidate for membership in this Church. All such candidates shall be presented to the church after counseling by the pastor or any of the called staff members, at any regular church service in any of the following ways:

1) Profession of Faith and Baptism

Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ may be received as a candidate for baptism by immersion, having assented to and accepted the aims and ideals of this church.

2) Scriptural Baptism

Any person who has made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ, but was baptized by the method of sprinkling or pouring or immersed as a condition for salvation, must be baptized by immersion and accept the aims and the ideals of this church.

3) Letter

Members in good standing of other churches of like faith and order who accept the aims and ideals of this church.

4) Statement

A candidate for membership may be received upon a statement of his profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and baptism by immersion, having been a member of a church of like faith and order, and having accepted the aims and ideals of this church.

Should there be any question as to any candidate, such question shall be referred to the Senior Pastor and the Deacon Body for investigation and the making of a recommendation to the church within thirty (30) days. See Article IV, Section 1 of these bylaws for a complete description of baptism.

### SECTION 3. New Convert/New Member Candidate Orientation

New converts and new member candidates of this church are required to complete Class 101: The Church's Membership class. This is a prerequisite to full membership within the church. (Approved 2/27/2000) The new member will be given a copy of the Constitution and Bylaws. In order to be considered for a leadership position (i.e. called staff, deacon, officer, trustee, teacher,

and other positions as deemed by Church Council) one must be a member. Once the convert or candidate is in agreement with our church's aims and ideals as set forth in the Membership Class and signs the Membership Covenant, he will be considered a member of New Beginnings Baptist Church with full duties and rights. This new member is strongly encouraged to continue with our Covenants of Class 201: Maturity; Class 301: Ministry and Class 401: Missions.

### **3.1 Students (7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades)**

This age group of new converts or membership candidates is required to take Student 101: Membership Class. Once the convert or candidate is in agreement with our church's aims and ideals as set forth in the Membership Class and signs the Membership Covenant, he will be considered a member of New Beginnings Baptist Church with full duties and rights. In order to be considered for a leadership position in this ministry, they must be a member (other activities requiring membership will be determined by the Student Minister). They are strongly encouraged to take the other Student classes of 201: Maturity; 301: Ministry; and 401: Missions.

### **3.2 Children**

This age group of new converts or membership candidates is required to take the New Believers Class to become members. Children may not be able to fully comprehend the provisions and meanings of membership and may not have a vested interest for the future of the church. Therefore, they will be full members except that they will not have a vote on matters brought before the church. In order to be considered for a leadership position in this ministry they must be a member (other activities requiring membership will be determined by the Children's Minister).

## **SECTION 4. Duties of Members**

Members are expected to be faithful in all of the duties essential to the Christian life; to attend faithfully and invite others to the services of the church; to give regularly for its support and its causes; to share in its organized work; to be involved in small groups; to extend a cordial welcome to all visitors at all times; and to notify the church office with change of address (physical and mailing), phone number, and email.

## **SECTION 5. Rights of Members**

Every member of the church is entitled to vote (exception Article I, Section 3.2) at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference, provided the member is present or provision has been made for absentee balloting. Every member of the church is eligible for consideration by the membership as a candidate for elective office in the church. Every member of the church may participate in the ordinances of the church as administered by the church. Every member will be entitled to receive communications from the church via mail, email, phone tree, newsletter and other means as necessary to inform them of activities of the church. They will also be entitled to a copy of the Constitution and Bylaws.

## **SECTION 6. Termination of Membership**

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

- 1) Death of the member.
- 2) Upon receipt of a request for letter from another Baptist church.
- 3) Exclusion by action of this church.
- 4) Erasure upon proof of membership elsewhere.
- 5) Inactivity of the member after a two year period.

## **SECTION 7. Church Discipline**

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

Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, the Senior Pastor and the Deacon Body will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accordance with Matthew 18. If it becomes necessary for the church to take action to exclude a member, a two-thirds vote of the members present is required and the church may proceed to declare the person to be no longer in the membership of the church. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance.

The church may restore to membership any person previously excluded, upon request of the excluded person, by three-fourths vote of the members present upon evidence of this person's repentance and reformation.

## **SECTION 8. Attenders**

There are those that regularly attend our church. These people may be in transition, making an inquiry about Christ, asking about baptism or other church matters. They may need time to heal from a previous experience. They may be believers that are not ready to become members and commit themselves to service. These are known as attenders. Attenders desire to have a relationship with the people of New Beginnings Baptist Church and participate in our activities. They are free to be involved, ask questions and participate in ministries, but can not hold any leadership position or vote. They will be included in mail outs, contacts, newsletters, emails and phone trees.

## **ARTICLE II. CHURCH OFFICERS**

The officers of this church shall be Senior Pastor, Associate Pastors, Trustees, and the Chair and Vice-Chair of: the Deacon Body, the Administrative Team and the Missions Team. These church officers will make up the Church Council. Each of these members, regardless of the number of positions held, has only one vote on any issue before the council.

The Church Council is responsible for:

- 1) Approving the job descriptions of the Associate Pastors (Section 2).
- 2) Assist in approving the Associate Pastor (see Section 2).

- 3) Initial selection of members of the Administrative Team (Section 7).
- 4) Initial selection of members of the Missions Team (Section 9).
- 5) Initial selection of members of the Deacon Body (Section 3).
- 6) Assist in recommending the termination of a Senior or an Associate Pastor (Section 1.2 (E) (3)).
- 7) Annually review the Constitution and Bylaws (Article VII).
- 8) Meeting with church member about a proposed change to the Constitution or Bylaws (Article VI).
- 9) They will additionally meet as the Senior Pastor calls for meetings for advice, wisdom, sounding board, vision, and activities of the church.

## **SECTION 1. Senior Pastor**

The Senior Pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament Church. The Senior Pastor will lead the congregation, the organizations, and the church staff to perform their tasks. The Senior Pastor is the leader of pastoral ministries in the church. As such, he works with the Deacon Body and the church staff to:

- 1) Lead the church in the achievement of its mission.
- 2) Proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers.
- 3) Care for the church's members and other persons in the community.

### **1.1 Term of Service**

- A) A Senior Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period of time.
- B) The salary, benefits, and prerequisites of a Senior Pastor shall be determined by mutual covenant between the Senior Pastor and the church.
- C) The Senior Pastor will meet the qualifications of I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:3-9.

### **1.2 Termination**

- A) Resignation. The Senior Pastor may resign at any time by giving written notice to the church.
- B) Retirement. The Senior Pastor may retire at any time by giving written notice to the church. It is hoped that he will stay on in an advisory role and help train the next Senior Pastor.
- C) Death.
- D) Incapacity. The church may terminate the employment of Senior Pastor upon incapacity, ineffectiveness, failure to abide by the provisions of this Constitution and/or Bylaws, or upon a violation of the qualifications of character and conduct.
- E) Removal.
  - 1) The church shall terminate employment when a Senior Pastor has repeatedly violated his responsibilities and after every attempt has failed to reconcile differences through prayer, counseling, and if necessary, confrontation.
  - 2) The church may vote for removal of a Senior Pastor upon two-thirds vote of the members present at any special called business meeting provided that the Senior Pastor and church was given written notice of such meeting for

removal at least thirty (30) days prior to such meeting.

- 3) The Deacon Body and Church Council upon three-fourths vote may recommend to the church body to terminate employment with a two weeks notice to the Senior Pastor. Written reason(s) for termination must be included with the notice.
- 4) Any vote for removal of a Senior Pastor shall be by written and signed ballots.

F) Compensation.

The Senior Pastor will be entitled to his accumulated vacation time for items A, B and C (his spouse or beneficiary in case of C) above only, provided he is in good standing with the church.

### **1.3 Pastor Search Committee**

Whenever a vacancy occurs for the Senior Pastor position, a Pastor Search Committee will be elected by the church to seek out a suitable Senior Pastor. This will occur at a time that is deemed appropriate by the Church Council. The church members will write the names of seven (7) adult members (ages 19 or over) on a ballot. The votes will be tabulated and reviewed by three (3) members of the Deacon Body and three (3) members of the Administrative Team. A pool of the highest vote receivers will be narrowed to the best cross section of our membership. No more than one family household member may serve. If any of the top receivers does not wish to serve, then the next person in line that maintains the best cross section of our membership will be contacted and so forth until seven (7) members have agreed to serve on the Committee. It is recommended that the book, *Pastor Search Committee Handbook* (LifeWay Press 2002, Revised 2007) or its latest revision be used during this process.

The Pastor Search Committee will provide for an interim pastor during their search process. They will elect a Chairman of their committee, a Vice-Chairman, a Secretary, and a Prayer Coordinator. When they have narrowed the process down to one candidate, they will spend at least twenty (20) hours with the candidate and his wife to get to know them. The candidate must be called to the church with a unanimous vote from the Pastor Search Committee. The church must be given at least a two week notice of the view of a call. The candidate will be presented to the Deacon Body and the church staff prior to being presented to the church in view of a call. The church must approve him with a three-fourths vote of the members present.

## **SECTION 2. Associate Pastors**

The Associate Pastors shall be those who are called of God to minister and will be employed as the church determines the need for such offices. A job description of such office shall be written by the Administrative Team and approved by the Church Council when the need for Associate Pastors is determined.

The procedure for selecting an associate pastor shall be as follows:

- 1) The Senior Pastor shall seek out, interview and then recommend to the Deacon Body and Church Council his choice for an Associate Pastor.
  - A) This opening will be posted to the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

- B) This opening will be posted to the Gregg Baptist Association.
- C) The Senior Pastor may pull a candidate from his circle of influence.
- 2) The candidate will then present himself/herself to the Deacon Body and Church Council for the purpose of sharing his/her testimony and call to the ministry. The Deacon Body and Church Council may then ask any questions they feel appropriate of this candidate.
- 3) The Deacon Body and Church Council will then vote on the candidate by secret ballot. A three-fourths minimum of the ballots cast will be required to recommend to the church to call the Associate Pastor.
- 4) The church must be given at least two weeks notice of the view of a call. The church must approve the candidate with a three-fourths vote of the members present.
- 5) Should the need arise to select an Associate Pastor during a prolonged absence of the Senior Pastor from the staff to act in behalf of the Senior Pastor, the same procedure of selection outlined above will be followed by the selected staff member. (Approved 10/15/1997).
- 6) The procedure for terminating an Associate Pastor shall be the same as for the Senior Pastor described in Section 1.2.

### **SECTION 3. Deacons**

Those who hold the office of deacon shall meet the qualifications as set forth in the Scriptures, Acts 6:3 and I Timothy 3:8-13. In accordance with the meaning of the work and the practice in the New Testament, deacons are servants of the church. Their task is to serve with the Senior Pastor and Associate Pastors in performing ministerial tasks; to lead the church in achievement of its mission; to proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers; and to care for church members and other persons in the community. The Deacons will elect for themselves a Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary. The Chairman will preside over the Deacon meetings and be the chief contact between the Deacon Body and Ministerial Staff and church body. The Vice-Chairman will assist the Chairman in his duties and, in his absence, be the chief contact. The Vice-Chairman will also be the church Moderator. The Secretary will keep the minutes of the Deacon meetings and provide a copy of the minutes to each Deacon and the Ministerial Staff.

The church shall elect Deacons by ballot at a special called meeting of the church. Ideally there shall be one Deacon elected to serve every fifteen to twenty church families. Deacons shall serve on a rotation basis as soon as the above mentioned quota has been fulfilled. There is no obligation to constitute as an active deacon a person who comes from another church where he has served as a deacon. However, after a minimum six month waiting period, and the prospective deacon taking the Membership Class, the active Deacon Body may recommend to the church that such individual be recognized as an active Deacon of this church.

Selection of new Deacons shall be made in the following manner:

- 1) The Deacon Body shall advise the Church Council of the number of new Deacons needed.
- 2) The Church Council shall nominate candidates based on knowledge of them, but shall not contact the candidates.
- 3) The Church Council shall unanimously present names of candidates to the Deacon Body.
- 4) The Deacons shall further qualify the candidates and reach a unanimous decision

concerning each nominee.

- 5) Each candidate will be contacted by the Deacons regarding his nomination and willingness to serve.
- 6) After allowing time for prayerful consideration, each candidate affirming his call shall be presented to the church as a nominee for the office of Deacon.
- 7) The election of Deacons shall take place at a special called business meeting following a Sunday worship service.
- 8) Each nominee must receive at least a two-thirds affirmative vote to be set aside for ordination.
- 9) The ordination of Deacon Nominees shall be conducted at a special service of worship on a Sunday as soon thereafter as practical.

Other duties include:

- 1) The Deacon Body will provide assistance to and fellowship with our widows.
- 2) The Deacon Body will be responsible for preparation and serving of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper.
- 3) The Deacon Body will assist the Ministerial Staff in the arrangements and observance of the ordinance of Baptism.
- 4) Interviewing candidates for application or endorsement into a seminary or Southern Baptist Convention University, for ordination, or for license to the ministry. Approval will mean the candidate will get the endorsement of New Beginnings Baptist Church for the purpose of the application, and we will ordain or license such person at the next convenient special service.
- 5) The Deacon Body will assist with the Covenant Classes (101, 201, 301 and 401) as needed to further educate our membership.
- 6) The Deacon Body will be active in the inreach and outreach ministry of the church.
- 7) The Deacon Body will have its own benevolence account to assist widows of our church and others the Deacon Officers see fit to assist.
- 8) The Deacon Body will meet with the Senior Pastor (or his appointed delegate and/or the church staff) as needed to consider the matters of the church and their respective duties.
- 9) It is expected that the Deacons will be regularly meeting with the church during its worship services, special called meetings, service events, fellowships and ministries.
- 10) It is expected that the Deacons are to be consistent in their tithes.
- 11) The Deacon Body will assist with hospital, nursing home and other visits.
- 12) The Deacon Body will oversee the maintenance, servicing and safety of the church vans.
- 13) The Deacon Body will oversee the maintenance, servicing and safety of the lawn equipment.
- 14) The Ministerial Staff needs encouragement and support and the Deacons will be expected to provide this support in three distinct areas:
  - A) Spiritual  
The Deacons shall encourage the pastors in their ministry, being slow to criticize and quick to defend in all situations where such actions do not offend scripture or conscience. Deacons collectively and individually shall make themselves available to the pastors for discussion of any problem and shall respect their confidence, wherein it is proper to do so.

B) Physical

The problems of a church are numerous and the demands on the ministerial staff's time and energy can be such as to sap their strength and impair their health. It is the duty of the Deacons to watch for and guard against this, and to take whatever remedial steps available to them which they deem appropriate.

C) Material Welfare

The Deacons shall concern themselves with the ministerial staff's material welfare. In case of emergencies, the Deacons will initiate corrective action, but this duty of the Deacons in no way impairs the privilege of any church member to take independent action.

15) Inactive status.

A) Incapacity, ineffectiveness, failure to abide by the provisions of this Constitution and/or Bylaws, or upon a violation of the qualifications of character and conduct.

B) Request of the deacon himself.

C) Death

#### **SECTION 4. Moderator**

The church Moderator will be the Vice-Chair of Deacons. The Moderator will preside over all church conferences. In the absence of the Vice-Chair of Deacons, the Chair of Deacons will preside.

#### **SECTION 5. Church Clerk**

The Vice-Chair of the Administrative Team will serve as Clerk. The Clerk will be responsible for keeping suitable minutes of all business conferences of the church. In the absence of Vice-Chair of the Administrative Team, the Chair of the Administrative Team will clerk.

#### **SECTION 6. Treasurer**

The Chairman of the Administrative Team will serve as Treasurer. The church Treasurer is responsible for all church financial matters.

#### **SECTION 7. Administrative Team**

This team will consist of seven (7) members who will serve in staggered three (3) year terms. Officers will be Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary. This Team will elect its own officers annually. One must have had at least one year prior experience on this Team to serve as an officer. The Chairman will also serve as the church Treasurer. The Vice-Chairman will also serve as the church Clerk. The Secretary will keep the minutes of the Administrative Team and provide a copy to each Team member and Ministerial Staff.

Selection process will be an annual convening of the Church Council to come up with names of members of the church to nominate to serve. The Council will obtain the nominee's

consent to serve. A unanimous vote is required to submit a member's name to the church body during a special business meeting. A three-fourths majority vote of the members present is required for approval to serve.

Responsibilities. This Team is responsible for the budget of the church and the personnel matters concerning employment at the church.

The Team will:

- 1) Supervise the gathering, counting and banking of all church moneys in a safe and proper manner; see that all bills and church financial obligations are paid at the proper time, and if funds are not available, a report will be promptly submitted to the church.
- 2) Be the administrator of the church budget and disburse funds in accordance therewith; make a monthly and an annual report to the church of its financial condition.
- 3) Prepare and present to the church an annual budget. This budget must be presented to the church no later than November 1<sup>st</sup> and if approved it will go into effect January 1<sup>st</sup> the following year. The budget will need a three-fourths approval from the members present to pass. All books, records and accounts kept by the Team shall be considered the property of the church. The books, and records, with the exception of the members' annual contributions, shall be open to inspection at all times by any member of this church.
- 4) Hire an outside firm to annually audit our books. The outside firm will report the results to the Administrative Team. The Administrative Team will share those results with the Ministerial Staff and Deacon Body.
- 5) Negotiate salaries, health and life insurance, insurance, retirement plans, vacation time, sick leave, sabbatical leave and annual reviews.
- 6) Handle any other personnel issues that may arise not elsewhere described in these Bylaws.
- 7) Have the authority to employ and terminate the services of non-Ministerial Staff with the recommendation of the Ministerial Staff.

## **SECTION 8. Trustees**

The church shall elect three (3) trustees to serve as legal officers for the church. The selection process will be that the Senior Pastor along with the Administrative Team will bring a nominee (the Council will obtain the nominee's consent to serve) to the church for their approval during a special called business meeting. A three-fourths vote from the members present will be required to approve the nominee as a Trustee. They shall hold in trust the church property. Upon a specific vote of the church authorizing each action, they shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property. When the signatures of trustees are required, they shall sign legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property or other legal documents related to church approved matters but shall assume no personal liability when performing their duties.

A Trustee can be removed by:

- 1) Incapacity, ineffectiveness, failure to abide by the provisions of this Constitution and/or Bylaws, or upon a violation of the qualifications of character and conduct. The Senior Pastor along with the Administrative Team will recommend to the church body during a special called business meeting to remove the Trustee. A two-thirds vote by the

members present will remove the Trustee from office.

- 2) His request.
- 3) Death.

## **SECTION 9. Missions Team**

This team will consist of nine (9) members who will serve in staggered three (3) year terms. Officers will be Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary. This Committee will elect its own officers annually. One must have had at least one year prior experience on this Team to serve as an officer.

Selection process will be an annual convening of the Church Council to come up with names of members of the church to nominate to serve. The Council will obtain the nominee's consent to serve. A unanimous vote is required to submit to the church body during a business meeting. A three-fourths majority vote of the present members is required to be approved to serve.

Responsibilities will be:

- 1) To oversee all mission projects the church is involved with, whether local, national or international.
- 2) To assist in coordination of resources and information with the groups that will be going on the trips.
- 3) To approve each trip as a ministry project of the church so that church resources may be used and to approve each leader that goes on the trip.
- 4) To raise money and supplies for missions. Fundraisers and special offerings will be done to accomplish this.

## **SECTION 10. Other Teams**

An ad-hoc team may be created to serve at the pleasure of the Ministerial Staff, Deacon Body, Administrative Team, or Missions Team to study a specific need or idea and report back to the appropriate body that appointed it. The ad-hoc team will be dissolved once their duties are fulfilled.

## **ARTICLE III. NON-MINISTERIAL STAFF**

Non-Ministerial Staff members shall be employed as the Ministerial Staff determines the need for their services. The Administrative Team shall have the authority to employ and to terminate services of non-Ministerial Staff members. Such employment and termination of services shall be with the recommendation of the Ministerial Staff.

Examples of this type of staff are office secretaries, personal assistants, interns, custodians.

## **ARTICLE IV. THE ORDINANCES**

### **SECTION 1. Baptism**

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Baptism is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus.

A person who receives Jesus Christ as Savior, who professes Him publicly at any worship service, and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord, shall be received for baptism by immersion.

Baptism shall be administered by the Senior Pastor or whomever the church shall authorize as an act of worship during any worship service. The Deacon Body and their wives shall assist in the preparation for, and observance of, baptism.

### **SECTION 2. The Lord's Supper**

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby believers, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His second coming. The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least once in each calendar quarter or as often as the church feels it is necessary to maintain the significance of the ordinance.

The Senior Pastor and the Deacons shall be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper. Selected Deacons will be responsible for the preparation of the elements.

It shall be the practice of this church to observe open communion.

## **ARTICLE V. CHURCH MEETINGS**

### **SECTION 1. Worship Services**

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning for preaching, instruction, evangelism and worship of Almighty God. Sunday afternoons and evenings, meetings for small groups and activities are held. Wednesday night meetings for prayer, student ministry, and children's ministry are held. Regular services may be cancelled to allow for special services.

In case of inclement weather, the Ministerial Staff, after consulting with the Deacon Body, may cancel any scheduled meeting or service for the physical welfare of the church family.

### **SECTION 2. Special Services**

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

### **SECTION 3. Regular Business Meetings**

Our church votes on six items as they come up. They are:

- 1) The annual budget. No later than November 1<sup>st</sup>.
- 2) The annual election of Administrative and Missions Team members. No later than November 1<sup>st</sup>.
- 3) The purchase of land or buildings.
- 4) The calling or dismissing of Ministerial Staff.
- 5) Changes in the Church Constitution and Bylaws.
- 6) The ordaining of Deacons.

### **SECTION 4. Special Business Meetings**

A special called business meeting may be held to consider matters of significance or urgency. Notice of the subject, date, time and location must be given for a special called business meeting and must be given at least two regular services in advance, unless extreme urgency renders such notice impracticable. Any of the four elected bodies (Trustees, Deacon Body, Administrative Team, or Missions Team) may call for a special business meeting. The body that calls for it will preside.

## **ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENTS**

This Constitution and its Bylaws may be added to or amended by the following procedure:

Any member can present a change to any member of the Church Council in writing. The Council will meet with the member to discuss the content and wording of the proposed change. Once the proposed change is presentable a regular business meeting will be called. Then the following will occur:

- 1) A proposed change shall be submitted in writing to the church Clerk at a regular business meeting by any member of the church.
- 2) The proposed amendment shall be read to the church without discussion.
- 3) Following the meeting, the proposed amendment shall be mailed to all church members or emailed with the consent of the member.
- 4) At the next regular business meeting (one week from the reading, see (2)) it shall be read a second time and the Moderator shall entertain a motion and a second, after which it shall be open for discussion and a vote.
- 5) A three-fourths majority of the members present shall be required for the motion to carry.
- 6) Any such change adopted by the church membership shall become effective after the close of the meeting at which it was adopted.

## **ARTICLE VII. ANNUAL REVIEW**

This Constitution and Bylaws will be reviewed annually by the Church Council to determine if any needed changes, deletions or additions are necessary.

May 23, 2010 – This major change to our Constitution and Bylaws passed.