

Constitution and By-Laws

September 9, 1998

As Amended July, 1999

As Amended October, 2000

As Amended June, 2004

As Amended June, 2007

All Bible quotations used in this document are from the New King James Version.

1. Preamble

Recognizing the Lordship of Jesus Christ as the head of this Church we do hereby establish and declare this Constitution and By-Laws to:

- Ensure that this body may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the Word of God that says "Let all things be done decently and in order." (I Corinthians 14:40),
- To preserve the liberties of each church member, and
- To declare the autonomy of this Church.

2. Name

This body is known as Summit Woods Baptist Church, a Missouri Corporation, incorporated on March 19, 1998.

3. Officers

The registered agent of the Corporation is the President of the Corporation.

The officers of the Corporation are President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary. The Moderator will serve as President. The Chairman of the Deacons will serve as Vice-President. The Treasurer of the Church will serve as Treasurer, and the Church Clerk will serve as the Secretary of the Corporation.

Moderator – The Moderator presides at all business meetings and acts as President of the Corporation. He will be nominated by the Elders and affirmed by the congregation annually. He should be familiar with and follow Roberts Rules of Order and this document and should be regular in his attendance at the business meetings of the Church.

Assistant Moderator – The Assistant Moderator presides at all business meetings in the absence of the Moderator. He will be nominated by the Elders and affirmed by the congregation annually. He should be familiar with and follow Roberts Rules of Order and this document and should be regular in his attendance at the business meetings of the Church.

Church Clerk – The Church Clerk should keep a record of all actions of the Church and maintain an up-to-date membership roll and a record of baptisms. All of these records are Church property. The Church Clerk shall nominate someone to moderate the business meeting if neither the Moderator or Assistant Moderator are present.

The duration of this Corporation is perpetual.

4. Purpose

The purpose of Summit Woods Baptist Church is to magnify God by exalting the King Jesus Christ, equipping the saints, encouraging one another, and extending the Kingdom

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.
(Matthew 28:19-20)

5. Polity and Affiliations

Recognizing that this Church is an autonomous body, self-governing under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the government of this Church is vested in its active members. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body. The Church cooperates with and supports the Missouri Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention.

6. Church Membership Covenant

Those desiring to be members of the Church should subscribe and adhere to the responsibilities of membership as outlined in the following Church Membership Covenant:

Acknowledging God's Son, Jesus Christ, as Savior and Lord, welcoming believer's baptism by immersion, recognizing that the integrity and vitality of the church are precious to our Lord, and trusting in the power of the Holy Spirit, I say to Summit Woods Baptist Church, you can count on me:

To Exalt the King

"I will extol You, my God, O King; and I will bless Your name forever and ever." – Psalm 145:1

By conducting myself as to bring honor to the Lord and living a life in obedience to the Word of God.

"Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ." (Philippians 1:27a)

"But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves." (James 1:22)

By serving the Lord according to church needs and my spiritual gifts.

"As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." (I Peter 4:10)

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." (Romans 12:1)

By helping sustain the church through regular giving.

"On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come." (I Corinthians 16:2)

To be Equipped by God's Word

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."
(II Timothy 3:16-17)

By studying and training for growth in understanding, skill, and spirit.

"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (II Timothy 2:15)

By honoring and defending biblical preaching, teaching, and ministry in the church and in the home.

"Preach the word! Be ready in season *and* out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, *because* they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn *their* ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry." (II Timothy 4:2-5)

"And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up."
(Deuteronomy 6:6-7)

"Bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord." (Ephesians 6:4b)

To Encourage One Another

"This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends." - John 15:12-13

By praying regularly and specifically for the concerns of the church.

"Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving." (Colossians 4:2)

By regular attendance.

"...not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching." (Hebrews 10:25)

By joining in the care of members in the fellowship.

"*And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.*" (1 Corinthians 12:26-27)

By shunning destructive chatter and placing a high value on unity in the church through addressing grievances biblically.

"For I fear lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I wish, and that I shall be found by you such as you do not wish; lest there be contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, backbitings, whisperings, conceits, tumults;" (2 Corinthians 12:20)

"*with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*" (Ephesians 4:2-3)

"*Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.*" (Ephesians 4:29)

"*Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every*

word may be established. And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector. "Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." (Matthew 18:15-18)

By making myself accountable to the church fellowship. I will resign or accept termination of membership for chronic and unrepentant indifference to the Word of God and this Covenant.

"submitting to one another in the fear of God." (Ephesians 5:21)

"For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? But those who are outside God judges. Therefore "put away from yourselves the evil person."" (1 Corinthians 5:12-13)

To Extend the Kingdom

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)

By being a faithful witness of the gospel in the world.

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

By praying for, supporting, participating in world-wide missions.

"And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen." (Matthew 28:18-20)

May the love of God, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.

7. Statement of Faith

"The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple; The statutes of the LORD *are* right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD *is* pure, enlightening the eyes; The fear of the LORD *is* clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD *are* true *and* righteous altogether. More to be desired *are they* than gold, Yea, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them Your servant is warned, *And* in keeping them *there is* great reward." (Psalm 19:7-11)

"All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." (II Timothy 3:16-17)

The Holy Bible (the Old and New Testament) is the inspired and inerrant Word of God, the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men. It is the divine and final authority for all Christian faith and practice.

We affirm the "Baptist Faith and Message" (as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000), and we recognize its value in defining the doctrinal distinctives of Southern Baptists. The "Baptist Faith and Message" is attached as Appendix A.

8. Amendments

This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended at any regular or specially called business meeting, as recommended by the Elders and affirmed by the congregation, provided that:

1. The amendment was read during the public session at a minimum of 2 consecutive Elders meetings prior to the regular or specially called business meeting,
2. A copy was filed with the Church Clerk, and
3. Every effort will be made to provide copies of the proposed amendments to the Church congregation at least two weeks prior to the date of the business meeting.

9. Dissolution

Upon dissolution of the corporation and after all debts and expenses of the corporation have been paid, the officers of the Corporation should distribute the remaining assets of the corporation to another entity qualifying as a charitable organization under the provisions of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, which has been determined by a majority of voting members at a regular or specially called business meeting.

10. Membership

Duties – Members are expected, first of all, to be faithful in all duties essential to the Christian life, and also to faithfully attend services of this church, to give regularly for its support and its causes, and to share in the organized work. Every member is encouraged to give faithfully, systematically, and sacrificially to support the ministry of the church. This is recognized as a privilege every sincere Christian should enjoy.

Every member is to seek to exemplify the Spirit of Christ through the proclamation of the Word of God, to worship God in a Spirit-filled manner, to evangelize the lost, to promote the spiritual life and growth of other members, to minister and witness in our Lord Jesus'

name to the community and the world, to fellowship with God and fellow believers in the Lord Jesus, and to be a person whose purpose is to be Christ-like in their daily living through total commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the Lord Jesus Christ.

General – This is a sovereign and Elder-led Southern Baptist church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The Church retains the right of exclusive self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of the church.

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

Candidacy and Induction of New Members – Any person may express their desire to become a candidate for membership by meeting with at least one of the Elders. When a person meets the requirements for membership, as set forth in these By-Laws, the Elders shall present them as members to the congregation at the close of any morning Sunday service. The Church Clerk will subsequently add the person's name to the church membership rolls. Everyone should be presented to the congregation for membership in one of the following ways:

1. By Profession of Faith and for baptism according to the policies of this Church;
2. By Promise of a Letter of membership from a Baptist church of like faith and order;
3. By Restoration upon a statement of prior conversion and baptism in a Baptist church when no letter is available;
4. By Statement of Prior Conversion Experience and New Testament baptism (baptism by immersion) and upon the recommendation of the Elders.

New Member Orientation – New members are expected to participate in the Church's New Member Orientation program.

Voting Rights – Those members who are regular participants in the life and work of this Church and who are at least sixteen years old are qualified to vote on those matters as defined in Section 11a, subsection V.

Termination – Membership in the Church can be terminated in several ways:

1. By death.
2. By the granting of a letter of membership to churches of like faith and order.
3. If the member requests in writing that they be released from their covenant obligations to the Church. The Church should, however, encourage the member to continue their fellowship.
4. By action of the Church in accordance with these By-Laws.

Discipline – The spirit of the Church must always be redemptive. Should a member according to Scripture become a liability to this Church, its welfare, or the best interests of all the members, the Elders will lead the church to make every reasonable effort to resolve the problem, keeping in mind:

"Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.' And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector." (Matthew 18:15-17)

"Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted." (Galatians 6:1)

"Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you." (Ephesians 4:31-32)

Should there be no solution, the Church may withdraw the offender's membership through the decision of the Elders and the Deacon officers. The church will be notified of the decision at the next regular business meeting.

"But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner— not even to eat with such a person." (1 Corinthians 5:11)

Any person whose membership has been terminated by discipline of any church action may, upon their request and recommendation of the Elders, be restored to full membership by the church through the decision of the Elders.

The Membership Roll – The Church Clerk should maintain an up-to-date membership roll. Members who have not regularly attended for six months should be contacted by the Church, and encouraged to continue their fellowship. After twelve months, they should be contacted and encouraged to re-unite with this Church or another church of like faith and order. The Church should continue to contact and encourage the members every six months for at least two years.

11. Elders and Pastors

11a. Elders

I. Qualifications

1 Timothy 3:1-7: *This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.² A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach;³ not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous;⁴ one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence⁵ (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?);⁶ not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil.⁷ Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.*

Titus 1:5-9: *⁵ For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you—⁶ if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination.⁷ For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money,⁸ but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled,⁹ holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.*

The following is a list of the biblical qualifications that an Elder must possess. No Elder will be a perfect man, but if he is clearly and persistently lacking in any of these qualities, he cannot serve in the church as an Elder. An Elder must have or be:

1. **Desire** 1 Timothy 3:1; 1 Peter 5:2
Elders must not be pressured into service if it is not their personal desire to serve in this capacity. An Elder's desire to serve must be God-given and his motives pure.
2. **Blameless** (above reproach) 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:7.
This qualification is the summation of all of the rest. It means that there is nothing in his life that would justify a legitimate accusation of misconduct or call his character into question.
3. **The husband of one wife** (lit. "a one-woman man") 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6.
Whether a man is single or married, he must be living a sexually pure life. For a married Elder, it also means that he must be faithfully devoted to loving his wife (Ephesians 5:25; 1 Peter 3:7).
4. **Temperate** (moderate, not given to excess) 1 Timothy 3:2.
In all areas of life, an Elder must be calm, well-balanced, careful, and sane—one who at all times is capable of clear thinking and sound judgment.
5. **Sober-minded** (a sensible, serious person) 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8.
This does not mean that an Elder may not laugh or joke or play. It means he leads a disciplined life, not allowing frivolous activities to distract him from more serious and important concerns.
6. **Of good behavior** (respectable, orderly) 1 Timothy 3:2.
The opposite of the Greek in this case is chaos (utter confusion). An Elder's outward behavior must demonstrate decency, orderliness, and self-control.
7. **Hospitable** (lit. "one who loves strangers") 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8.
An Elder must be one who shows genuine kindness and hospitality, not only to the members of his church, but also to people he does not know well.
8. **A lover of what is good** (lit. "one who is inclined to do good") Titus 1:8.
Closely related to hospitality, an Elder must be one who not only loves the concept of goodness, but also is prone to doing good to others.
9. **Able to teach** (lit. "skilled in teaching") 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9.
There is no biblical requirement that an Elder have a formal education, but he must have the gift of teaching and be a defender of the truth (cf. 2 Timothy 2:2, 24; 2:15; Titus 2:7-8).
10. **Not given to wine** (lit. "not a drinker" or "not addicted to wine") 1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7.
Though not an absolute prohibition, this is a serious warning that an Elder cannot be preoccupied with alcohol or known as a drinker. Due to its potential as a stumbling block, however, it may be advisable for Elders to abstain from alcohol altogether in order to avoid offense or damaging influence (cf. Romans 14; 1 Corinthians 8).
11. **Not violent** (lit. not "a giver of blows," or "a striker") 1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7.
An Elder must be a man who solves problems and settles disputes peacefully, using persuasive words and calm demeanor, not his fists or other weapons.
12. **Gentle** (patient, gracious, forgiving) 1 Timothy 3:3; 2 Timothy 2:24.
An Elder must not be a man who holds a grudge or is slow to forgive. He must be one who will patiently bear with those who are needy, difficult, reluctant to change, or slow to learn.
13. **Not quick-tempered** (he must be slow to anger) Titus 1:7; James 1:19-20
Anger in itself is not always a sin. There is a righteous sort of anger. An Elder, though, must be a man who recognizes and controls his own propensity to become angry.

14. **Not quarrelsome** (not argumentative) 1 Timothy 3:3; 2 Timothy 2:24-26; James 3:13-18
An Elder must be a man who will defend the truth strongly, but in a peaceable manner. He must not be one who allows himself to become embroiled in hostile disputes or petty arguments.
15. **Just** (righteous or upright) Titus 1:8.
An Elder is a man who is known for doing what is right. He lives a life of practical righteousness, trying to reflect God's view in every decision he makes.
16. **Holy** (lit. "devout" or "set apart to God") Titus 1:8.
An Elder must be firmly committed to God and His Word. He must be faithful to the ministry and to biblical doctrine, not one who gives in to social, political, or religious pressure to compromise.
17. **Self-controlled** (or self-disciplined) Titus 1:8.
An Elder must be a man who is disciplined in terms of his response to physical desires for food, pleasure, comfort, money, sleep, sex, or anything else which could cause him to stumble.
18. **Not covetous** (not a lover of money) 1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 5:2.
An Elder cannot be motivated in the ministry by financial gain or greedy in his lifestyle. He is a man who will trust the Lord, be content with what is provided, and be thankful.
19. **One who rules his own house well** (a good manager and leader) 1 Timothy 3:4; Titus 1:6.
An Elder must have proven himself a good manager of his children (if he has children), his personal finances, and his household in general.
20. **Having his children in submission with all reverence** (having obedient, respectful, faithful children) 1 Timothy 3:4-5; Titus 1:6.
The children of an Elder must not have a reputation for uncontrolled behavior or insubordination. Additionally, an Elder must not be a harsh or brutal man, but must maintain order in his family through loving leadership, consistent biblical training, and proper discipline.
21. **Not a novice** (not a new or immature believer) 1 Timothy 3:6.
An Elder must be a mature believer, especially in relation to others in his particular church. If even a capable man is elevated to the position too rapidly, he will battle with pride.
22. **He must have a good testimony among those who are outside** (well respected even by unbelievers in the community) 1 Timothy 3:7.
An Elder must have a consistently good testimony in all places and with all people (aside from those who would persecute him or accuse him falsely), even outside the church. He must be just, honest, peaceable, and loving in every context.
23. **Not self-willed** (not anxious to control others or to have his own way) Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 5:3.
An Elder must not be a man who is anxious to dominate or control others. He must be a team-player, realizing that while he is an Elder, he is also one of the sheep.
24. **An example to the flock:** 1 Peter 5:3; Titus 2:7.
An Elder will not be perfect, but he must be a man who will lead the church, by instruction and example, according to God's Word.

II. Biblical Responsibilities of Church Elders

A. Oversee, Lead	1 Peter 5:2 – <i>Be Elders of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers – not because you must, but because you are willing</i>
B. Equip	Ephesians 4:12 – <i>for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry</i>
C. Teach	1 Timothy 5:17 – <i>whose work is preaching and teaching</i> 1 Timothy 3:2 – <i>able to teach</i>
D. Protect, Care, Help	Titus 1:9-11 Acts 20:28-31 1 Peter 5:1-2 1 Thessalonians 5:12-14
E. Pray	James 5:14 – <i>call the elders of the church to pray over him</i>
F. Be Examples	1 Peter 5:3 – <i>being examples to the flock</i>
G. Ordain Others	1 Timothy 4:14 – <i>with the laying on of the hands of the eldership</i>
H. Accountable before God	Hebrews 13:17 – <i>Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.</i>

III. Members of the Board of Elders

While no specific number is mentioned, the Biblical mandate is for a plurality of Elders to lead the local church. An Elder candidate must be a church member for at least one year with the exception of the Pastor-Teacher and Associate Pastor(s).

The Elder Board shall consist of the Pastor-Teacher, the Associate Pastor(s), and other qualified men as affirmed by the church body. At least one member of the Elder Board must be a lay elder.

IV. Length of Service

Each Elder, with the exception of the Pastor-Teacher and the Associate Pastor(s), is appointed for a 3-year term. At the end of the 3-year term, the Elder can be re-appointed to another 3-year term.

After two consecutive 3-year terms, the Elder must take a year off from serving on the Elder Board before he can be considered for another 3-year term.

V. Matters to be Considered by the Congregation

The following list of items will require congregational affirmation of the Elder's recommendation. The level of affirmation necessary is two-thirds (2/3) of the qualified church members in attendance. All items considered in the Business Meeting will come from the Elders. Motions can be amended by recommendation of a church member if approved by the Elders present. Any item that does not reach the required two-thirds affirmation will be suspended until further action, if any, is recommended by the Elders to the congregation. In addition to the following list, the Elders may choose to bring additional items before the congregation for their affirmation.

- Selection or dismissal of the Pastor-Teacher and Associate Pastor(s) and Elder(s).
- Selection of deacons.
- Initial selection and triennial affirmation of Elders with the exception of the Pastor-Teacher and Associate Pastor(s).
- Affirmation of the moderator and assistant moderator.
- Annual budget
- Capital expenditures which exceed \$25,000 annually.
- Amending of By-Laws
- Other matters in which the Elder Board feels led to seek the members' advice and counsel.

VI. Checks and Balances

Decisions: Made by unanimous vote of the Elders. In the case where an action is taken against an Elder, the remainder of the Board must be unanimous.

Regular Meetings: The Elders shall hold regular meetings, a portion of which shall be open to the church members.

Annual Evaluation: At the end of each year, the Elders will conduct an evaluation of each other, for the purpose of providing biblical accountability in order that the integrity and character of each Elder remains consistent with the qualifications set out by Scripture. Without the Elder being present, the remaining Elders will conduct the evaluation. If an issue is found in that Elder, he may be asked to step down for a year. The issue may not necessarily be sin – it could be some other issue that simply may prevent the Elder from serving fully – maybe the Elder in question is overcommitted or needs to spend more time with his family. The reason for an Elder not serving does not have to be given out publicly.

Bringing an Accusation Against an Elder:

I Timothy 5:19-20 – *Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses. Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear.*

Also see Matthew 18:15-20

Any accusation brought against an Elder should follow the Biblical pattern outlined below:

1. Take your concern privately to the Elder.
2. If the concern is not resolved, take 2 or 3 witnesses and go again and speak with the Elder.
3. If the concern is still not resolved, take your concern before the Elder Board in closed session.
4. The Elders will then share their decision with the one who brought the accusation. If the accusation is found to have merit, it will be brought before the congregation.
5. If the person who brought the accusation does not feel that the accusation has been resolved, the person may begin the process to remove the Elder as outlined in section 13, titled *Special Business Meeting to Determine Removal of an Elder*.

VII. Nomination and Appointment of Elders

This process should follow three steps:

1. The candidate should express his desire and willingness to serve to the Elders. A church member may also recommend a candidate to the Elders.
2. The candidate is examined and trained by the Elder Examination Board and recommended to the church by the Elders.
3. The candidate is affirmed and ordained by the congregation, thereby becoming a member of the Elder Board.

The Elder Examination Board will initially be filled by Deacons as appointed by the Deacon Board. This initial board will function until there is a plurality of Elders in place in the church, whereby this initial board will be dissolved.

In the case where the number of Elders ever falls below three, then the deacons will again take the responsibility to appoint men to serve on the Elder Examination Board until a plurality of Elders is again in place. The Deacon body chairman, vice-

chairman, and secretary will serve with the Pastor-Teacher and Associate Pastor(s) as an interim Elder Board to carry on the business of the church.

11b. Pastor-Teacher

Qualifications – Primary among the qualifications for the Pastor-Teacher is satisfactory evidence that he is a Spirit-led, Bible-believing man of God. He must meet the qualifications set forth in Section 11a, Elders.

The Pastor-Teacher must be of sound Bible doctrine and must subscribe to Church Covenant and The Statement of Faith in these By-Laws.

The Call of the Pastor-Teacher – The Pastor-Teacher is called for an indefinite period of time. The salary and other terms of the call should be determined before the time of the call. There are to be no contracts between the Pastor-Teacher and the Church. The Elders are responsible for determining salary and other terms of the pastoral agreement.

Role – The Pastor-Teacher will conduct the public services and preach at the appointed time and place of worship, administer the ordinances, always be ready to assist with his counsel in both the temporal and spiritual welfare of the Church, have special watchcare over all its affairs, and perform duties and responsibilities contained in the Pastor-Teacher job description as well as additional duties that may be required. The Pastor-Teacher will serve as an equal member of the Elder Board. He will supervise the ministry and support staff.

Termination – No time limit shall be put on the services of the Pastor-Teacher. The Pastor-Teacher may relinquish the office of Pastor-Teacher by giving 30 days notice to the Church at the time of resignation. Compensation of unused vacation and leave time shall be in accordance with the policy and procedures of the Church.

Removal of the Pastor-Teacher should follow the same steps outlined to remove an Elder, as defined in Section 11a. Any church owned property should be vacated or relinquished within 30 days after the official action by the resigning or dismissed pastor.

11c. Associate Pastor(s)

Qualifications – Primary among the qualifications for the Associate Pastor is satisfactory evidence that he is a Spirit-led, Bible-believing man of God. He must meet the qualifications set forth in Section 11a, Elders.

The Associate Pastor must be of sound Bible doctrine and must subscribe to Church Covenant and The Statement of Faith in these By-Laws.

The Call of the Associate Pastor – The Associate Pastor is called for an indefinite period of time. The salary and other terms of the call should be determined before the time of the call. There are to be no contracts between the Associate Pastor and the Church. The Elders are responsible for determining salary and other terms of the pastoral agreement.

Role – The Associate Pastor will perform duties and responsibilities contained in his job description as well as additional duties that may be required. The Associate Pastor will serve as an equal member of the Elder Board.

Termination – No time limit shall be put on the services of the Associate Pastor. The Associate Pastor may relinquish the office of Associate Pastor by giving 30 days notice to the Church at the time of resignation. Compensation of unused vacation and leave time shall be in accordance with the policy and procedures of the Church.

Removal of the Associate Pastor should follow the same steps outlined to remove an Elder, as defined in Section 11a. Any church owned property should be vacated or relinquished within 30 days after the official action by the resigning or dismissed pastor.

12. Acquiring Ministry and Support Staff

Ministry Staff – In addition to the Pastor-Teacher and the Associate Pastor(s), the church may employ additional ministry personnel. The Elders shall be responsible for determining the duties of and the hiring of such personnel.

Support Staff – The Elders shall be responsible for determining the need of, the duties of, and the hiring of support staff for the church.

13. Meetings

Worship Services – The Church meets regularly every Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday evening for preaching, instruction, evangelism, and worship of Almighty God. These meetings are open for the entire Church membership and for all other people and are conducted under the direction of the Pastor-Teacher.

Special Services – Revival services and any other church meetings, which are essential in the promotion of the objectives of the Church, should be placed on the Church calendar.

Regular Business Meetings – Regular business meetings are to be held once a quarter, on a week designated by the Moderator, in the months of February, May, August, and November. Notice of the meeting, including its location and time, shall be made from the pulpit on the Sunday prior to the meeting during the morning worship services. Regular business meetings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order. Twenty-five voting members constitute a quorum for a regular business meeting.

Special Business Meetings – A special business meeting may be called at any time by the Elder Board. Notice of the meeting, including its purpose, location, and time, shall be made from the pulpit and printed in the bulletin for two successive Sundays prior to the meeting during the morning worship services. 100 voting members of the Church constitute a quorum for a special business meeting.

Absentee ballots will be accepted on items discussed in special business meetings only.

Special Business Meeting to Determine Removal of an Elder (including the Pastor-Teacher and Associate Pastor(s)) – By written petition of 50 church members to the Deacon chairman, a special business meeting for the purpose of recommending the dismissal of an Elder (including the Pastor-Teacher and Associate Pastor(s)) only after the steps outlined in Section 11a, subsection VI have been followed. Notice of the meeting, including its purpose, location, and time, shall be made from the pulpit and printed in the bulletin for two successive Sundays prior to the meeting during the morning worship services. 100 voting members of the Church constitute a quorum for a special business meeting. The level of affirmation necessary is seventy-five (75) percent of the qualified church members in attendance.

14. Ordinances

Baptism – A person who received Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith, and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord shall be received for baptism, as follows:

1. Baptism is by immersion in water.
2. The Pastor-Teacher or whomever the Elders authorize administers baptism. The deacons assist in the preparation for and observance of baptism.
3. Baptism is administered as an act of worship during any worship service.
4. The Elders should counsel a person professing Christ who fails to be baptized after a reasonable period of time. If the person doesn't show an interest in being baptized, they should be removed from the list of those awaiting baptism.

The Lord's Supper – The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby Born Again Christians, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His coming.

1. The Lord's Supper should be observed at least quarterly.
2. The Elders are responsible for overseeing the administration of the Lord's Supper.
3. The deacons are responsible for preparing and serving the Lord's Supper.

15. Organizations

General – To help complete the work of the Church, the Elder Board may appoint various committees, councils, and ministry teams as it deems necessary. Membership in these organizations can be made up of Elders, staff, and/or church members at-large. Members of these various organizations must have been active members of the Church for at least six months (unless expressly stated otherwise) and shall demonstrate spiritual maturity.

The responsibilities and powers of these organizations shall be set and determined by the Elder Board.

Deacons

Qualifications – The Scriptural qualifications for a deacon are described in Acts 6:3 and I Timothy 3:8-13:

"Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business;" (Acts 6:3)

"Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless. Likewise, their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." (1 Timothy 3:8-13)

A deacon candidate must have been a member for at least one year.

Duties of the Deacons:

1. Support the Church in achievement of its purpose.
2. Proclaim the Gospel to believers and unbelievers.
3. Serve the Church through the ministry adopted by the deacon body.
4. Care for other persons in the community.
5. Support the programs of the church.
6. Perform ordinances of the Church.
7. Model service to the Congregation.

Term of Service – A deacon serves the Church as long as he is a member, maintains the Scriptural qualifications, and carries out the duties set forth in this constitution. A deacon can choose to become inactive if the circumstances of his life warrant, but he must be re-affirmed by the church body. A deacon should be removed from service as a deacon upon recommendation

to the Elders by the deacon body when he no longer maintains the Scriptural qualifications or fails to carry out his duties as set forth in these By-Laws. In this case, the guidelines for Membership Discipline should be followed.

The Nomination Process – Qualified Church members can nominate men of the Church who conform to the Scriptural requirements for a deacon by submitting a nomination form to the Elders or any serving deacon. The representatives from the Elders and active deacons then interview the nominee to ensure that he meets the Scriptural requirements.

Deacons should be affirmed by the congregation as outlined in section 11a, subsection V. Those deacon candidates affirmed, who have not been previously ordained, will go through a six-month formal training and testing period by active deacons. After he completes the training and testing period, and upon recommendation of the deacon body, the Church will ordain him. After ordination, he becomes a voting member of the deacon body.

Officers – The deacons have three officers: a chairman, chairman-elect, and a secretary. The officers serve for one year. In September, the chairman-elect becomes chairman, and the deacons should elect a new chairman-elect and a secretary. During the year the chairman serves, he should train the chairman-elect. Once the Chairman's term of office is complete, he is not eligible to serve as an officer for one year.

Christian Education Council

The Christian Education Council shall be made up of division directors of Sunday School, Youth, Awana, men's and women's Bible study, Elders, and any other directors as deemed by the Elders.

The responsibility of this Council is to prepare goals and objectives, scope and sequence for all materials taught. They will also approve all teaching material used.

In the implementation of curriculum, the Christian Education Council shall ensure that all education shall be coordinated and progressive according to age and objective to prepare children and adults for a life of service.

The Christian Education Council shall put together a schedule of meetings.

Sunday School

The Sunday School is the basic organization for the Bible teaching program. The Sunday School is organized by departments and classes as appropriate for all ages, and is directed by a Sunday School Director.

Its responsibilities are:

1. Teaching the Biblical revelation,
2. Reaching people for Christ and Church membership.

WMU

The Women's Missionary Union is the mission education, mission action, and mission support organization of the Church. They have officers and organizations as required by the program.

The WMU is responsible for:

1. Teaching missions,
2. Engaging in mission action,
3. Supporting world missions through praying and giving,
4. Providing and interpreting information regarding the work of the Church and Southern Baptists.

Standing Committees

Finance – Responsible for consulting with all organizational leaders regarding their budgetary needs that should be given consideration in planning the annual church budget.

The committee will:

1. Prepare and submit to the Elders for approval a proposed annual budget,
2. Promote a program of financing for the needs of the Church,
3. Implement and periodically review an accounting system adequate for the needs of the Church,
4. Monitor the expenditures of the Church funds in accordance with the approved budget.
5. Prepare and update a policy and procedures manual.
6. See that periodic audits of the financial books are performed in a financially recognized business manner.

Personnel – Responsible for assisting the Elders in matters related to employed personnel administration and management. Family members of any paid church employee are not eligible to serve on this committee.

The committee will:

1. Be responsible for employment administration, such as recommending salaries, benefits, and annual reviews for all paid personnel.
2. Evaluate and recommend the addition of ministerial or support staff positions.

3. Write job descriptions for all paid positions.
4. Cooperate with the immediate supervisor or appropriate committee involved with each employee.
5. Notify the Elders whenever remedial actions are initiated with any called staff member.
6. Prepare and update a policy and procedures manual.

By-Laws – Responsible for maintaining and recommending amendments to the constitution and by-laws of the Church.

Ministry Teams

A Ministry team may be formed when it is deemed necessary by the deacons and approved by the Elders.

The deacon officers shall present names before the Elders to fill positions on the Ministry teams. These shall be evaluated yearly.

16. Pastor-Teacher and Associate Pastor Search Process

1. The primary call of a Pastor-Teacher must be from God, and it is the responsibility of the Elders to seek God's leadership in taking the necessary steps to secure a Pastor-Teacher.
2. The Elders should investigate the merits of each man under consideration in regard to his personal character, education, ministerial record, preaching ability, his Christian experience, his call to the ministry, his doctrinal positions, his relationship to his former congregations, and his general fitness for the pastorate of this Church. He must meet the qualifications set forth in the qualifications of a Elder outlined in section 11a.
3. When, after prayerful consideration, the Elders unanimously find a man worthy of the Church's consideration, they should present him to the Church, as follows:
 - a. An announcement should be made from the pulpit during all Sunday services that the Elders are ready to present a candidate. The schedule for the rest of the process should also be announced. During this process the Church should be prayerfully considering the candidate.
 - b. Then the candidate should be heard by the Church membership in all Sunday services.
 - c. After the candidate is heard, the Church, having prayerfully considered the candidate, will determine whether or not to call the Pastor during a special business meeting. This meeting shall be called to order at the end of each morning service. The Elders will publicly announce the outcome of the calling at the next church service.
4. Only one candidate shall be presented to the Church at any one time.