

BYLAWS
OF
CRESTWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH
(adopted by church May 2012; amended July 2022)

ARTICLE I. CHURCH 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.

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 at any regular service for membership in any of the following ways:

1. By profession of faith and after baptism by immersion.
2. By promise of letter of recommendation from another Baptist church of like faith and order.
3. By statement of prior conversion experience (in agreement with the Church Constitution, Article III) and baptism by immersion under the authority of a church of like faith when no letter is obtainable.

Section 3. Rights of Members

1. Every member of the church 12 years of age and older is entitled to vote in all elections and on all questions submitted in business meetings, provided the member is present. (Provision can be made for proxy voting by home-bound members.)
2. Church members 18 years of age and older are eligible for consideration by the membership as candidates for elective office in the church or as voting members of church committees, with the exception of ministerial search committees, the Finance Committee, and the Personnel Committee. Due to the sensitive and serious nature of the work of these committees, members must be at least 21 years of age.
3. Church members age 16 to 17 may serve on select committees in an advisory (non-voting) capacity.
4. It is recommended that an individual be an active member for at least 6 months before being considered for a committee or teaching position.

Section 4. Termination of Membership

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways: (1) death of a member, (2) transfer of letter to another Baptist church, (3) exclusion by action of this church, or (4) erasure upon request or proof of membership in a church of another denomination.

ARTICLE II. CHURCH OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

All who serve as officers of the church and those who serve on church committees shall be members of this church.

Section 1. Church Officers

The church officers shall be pastor, ministerial staff, deacons and trustees.

(1) Pastor

The pastor is responsible for leading the church in functioning as a New Testament church. The pastor shall lead the congregation and organizations, and the church staff to perform their tasks. A major concern of the pastor is to perform pastoral responsibilities. The pastor is the leader of worship, proclamation, education, pastoral ministries, and moderator. In the absence of the Senior Pastor, the chairman of Deacons or his designee will serve as moderator.

(2) Ministerial Staff

The ministerial staff shall be called and employed as the church determines the need for such offices. A job description shall be written when the need for a staff member is determined. *See ministerial search committee procedure at end of this section.*

(3) Deacons of Crestwood Baptist Church conform with the meaning of the work and practice of the New Testament as outlined in Acts 6:1-7 and I Timothy 3:8-12. They help lead the church in the fulfillment of short- and long-range plans adopted by the church body to minister the gospel of Jesus Christ to the local community and Southeast Texas. They are expected to be faithful in attendance in the services and in the performance of their duties in all matters pertaining to the welfare and work of the church. They shall have been active members of Crestwood Baptist Church for at least two full years prior to consideration as a deacon.

Once deacon officers determine a need to increase the number of deacons, it is first discussed by the deacon body during a deacons' meeting. Typical reasons for such an increase are growth in church membership or a decrease in the number of active deacons. Once a number of additional deacons is determined, the pastor is notified.

The pastor will determine a date to preach on the qualifications and ministry of deacons, and that date is made known to the church body. Following this preaching, a nomination packet will be distributed to church members. This packet will include: a list of current deacons, a list of deacon qualifications, and a nomination form. Church members are given three weeks to submit nominations.

The following review process is accomplished by beginning with the nominee receiving the highest number of nominations and ending with the candidate receiving the least nominations of six or more. This is done in order to ensure the deacon body carries out the will of the church body.

- A list of candidates who received a minimum of six (6) nominations is presented to the deacon body for consideration.
- The deacon body reviews the list to determine each indeed meets the qualifications of a deacon.
- In the event of a tie for the last needed position, all ties will be considered. This may result in a larger number of deacon candidates than originally decided upon.
- Deacons then meet individually with candidates to determine their ability and willingness to

serve.

- Once the final candidates have been determined, the names will be presented to the church as potential deacons. This allows the church to begin praying for them as they walk through the process.
- The candidates then enter the deacon training process, which is supervised by the pastor.
- Upon their successful completion of this training, those nominees go before the Ordaining Council for examination and approval. The Ordaining Council is composed of ordained men of Crestwood Baptist Church and others of like faith.

Those approved by the Ordaining Council will then be recommended to Crestwood Baptist Church for final approval. This will be done by a show of hands during a special called business meeting as part of the Ordination Ceremony. After the Ordination Ceremony these individuals will then be considered active ordained deacons.

Those men who have been ordained and served as deacons in a Baptist church will be considered for acceptance in the Deacon Body of Crestwood Baptist Church after being an active member for at least six months. The deacons will notify the church of the prospect's willingness to be considered as a deacon candidate. A six-month observation and evaluation process will be conducted by the deacon body. At the conclusion of that process, the deacons will vote to present him to the church for approval. Upon a favorable vote by the church and successful completion of the deacon training process, he will become an active deacon.

(4) Trustees

The church shall elect five or more trustees (at least two of whom shall be deacons) to 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.

Ministerial Search Committee Procedure

When it is necessary to elect a ministerial search committee, the process will begin with Crestwood members being given the opportunity to nominate up to 5 members each. Deacons will contact members nominated to determine their willingness to serve, if elected. Those receiving the most nominations (but at least 5) will be contacted first (followed by those receiving fewer, in descending order) until up to 10 men and up to 10 women have agreed to serve, if elected. Those people will compose the list of nominees for election to the committee. In the case of ties the maximum of 20 nominees can be exceeded.

At a specified future date a called business meeting will be held for the election. Ballots will be collected and the committee will be announced at the next service or business meeting. The committee will be structured as follows: 1) the two women receiving the most votes; 2) the two deacons receiving the most votes; and 3) the top three individuals (after the above) receiving the most votes. Under no circumstances will 2 members of the same family (immediate or extended) be eligible to serve on the same search committee. Deemed ineligible to serve by virtue of position are ministerial staff, ministerial staff family members, and paid staff.

The Ministerial Search Committee will interview applicants and select the individual they believe to be God's choice for Crestwood. They will work with the Personnel and Finance Committees to establish a compensation package which must be approved by the church prior to an offer being made to any candidate. They will give the church an opportunity to meet and become acquainted with the candidate, and then present the candidate to the church for a vote (must be approved by 75% of the members present).

When it is deemed necessary to hire interns or interim ministerial staff, the pastor or moderator (in consultation with the personnel committee) will make recommendations to the deacons of the best candidate. If approved by the deacons, the candidate will be presented to the church for final approval (must be approved by 75% of the members present). Interim staff may be considered for permanent staff positions, but they must follow the same process as other applicants. However, an interim pastor cannot be considered for the full-time pastor position.

Section 2. Church Committees

(1) Authority The church may at any time establish such temporary and permanent committees as it deems appropriate. Members of all committees shall be elected by the church. Temporary power of appointment is given to the Moderator. The action of any and all committees shall be subject to approval by the church in a business meeting and all committees shall make recommendations and reports to the church in business meetings as necessary. It shall be remembered that the power of each individual committee is advisory and suggestive only except where the church has delegated authority in specific cases.

(2) Standing Committees A standing committee is one which, once established, continues in existence and assignment until the church decides otherwise. Annual nominations for members of permanent committees shall be made by the Committee on Committees.

(3) Temporary Committees A Temporary Committee is one which is established for a specific purpose and whose existence ceases when its final report is made to the church without regard to the church year date. The continued existence of a Temporary Committee depends on its assignments.

(4) Membership The size of each committee shall be determined according to the need of each by the Committee on Committees, unless otherwise specified in this document. The members of each committee shall be elected by the church with the recommendations to be brought by the Committee on Committees except in the case of Temporary Committees. Temporary Committees may be appointed by the Moderator or elected by the church in a regular business session at the discretion of the church. Each committee member shall be a member of the church and shall be actively involved in church life. It is recommended that no one person shall serve on more than four (4) committees and leadership positions during one year, except as an ex-officio member.

(5) Committee Chairmen A chairman of each committee shall be designated by the Committee on Committees. In some cases, the chairman will assist the Committee on Committees in securing and selecting committee members. An individual cannot chair more than one standing committee. The chairman will work to ensure active and healthy participation by all members.

(6) Meetings All committees shall hold as many regular meetings as are necessary for the carrying out of the assigned purpose and work of the committee. Regular meetings shall be scheduled on the church calendar located in the church office. Meetings should not be scheduled at times that would prohibit church attendance. Each committee will police itself in regard to attendance and will record meeting minutes in the most efficient manner.

(7) General Committee Composition All committees are composed of a professional staff representative (in ex-officio capacity unless otherwise specified), at least one deacon, and as many church members as are necessary for proper committee functioning with a minimum of three for each committee. Certain committees will have term limits as defined in the individual committee composition; otherwise the term will be one year. No member of a committee will serve more than 3 years in a row. It is recommended that only one family member at a time can serve on the same committee (no husband and wife serving on the same committee at the same time, etc.)

(8) Committee Responsibilities

(A) Church Council

Responsibilities The Church Council shall plan and coordinate the activities and programs of the church in an advisory capacity. In the face of scheduling conflicts between committees and/or program organizations, the church council shall work to resolve disputes. In the absence of a long-range planning committee, the Church Council shall recommend long-range plans for approval by the church.

Composition The committee shall be comprised of the pastor, all professional staff members, and the chairmen or head of all committees and program organizations of the church. The pastor, moderator, or his designee shall serve as chairman of the Church Council.

(B) Committee on Committees

Responsibilities

- a. To select, enlist and nominate persons to serve on church committees.
- b. Review committee policies and procedures and make recommendations to the church.
- c. Review need for church committees (names of committees, number to serve on each committee), committee duties, and make recommendations for revisions to the church.
- d. Select, enlist, and nominate committee chairmen and members and present them to the church for approval.
- e. Fill vacancies that occur during the year.
- f. Work to resolve conflicts within committees.
- g. Nominate special committees as assigned by the church.
- h. In rare circumstances the Committee on Committees has the authority to replace committee members.

Selection Process/Composition

- a. Committee consists of 8 people, 2 of whom are deacons (selected by the deacons each year) and 6 of whom are elected by the church at large for 3 year terms with 2 people rotating off the committee each year.
- b. Recommendations for potential committee candidates will be submitted to the deacons during the month of July. Deacons will present a panel of candidates (at least twice the number needed) for church selection by secret ballot at an August business meeting.

(C) Nominating Committee

Responsibilities

- a. To expand the involvement level of the church at large by establishing and staffing all church elected positions not filled by Committees on Committees unless otherwise specified.
- b. To fill Sunday School leadership/teaching and program ministry leadership positions.
- c. Work with church leaders to determine ministry needs and enlist qualified persons to fill church elected positions of leadership.

(D) Building and Grounds Committee

Responsibilities

- a. The Building and Grounds Committee is responsible for the care of all church property and buildings.
- b. Establish basic policies and procedures for the use and maintenance of church buildings, property, equipment and space.
- c. Make regular inspection of all church property and keep current inventory of all furnishings and equipment.
- d. Make annual study of space needs and allocations to determine if adjustment is needed.
- e. Develop recommendations regarding annual budget needs and administer maintenance budget.
- f. Coordinate and secure contract labor for maintenance of projects relating to building and grounds.

(E) Finance Committee

Responsibilities

- a. Ensure that accurate and complete financial records are being maintained in the Finance Office.
- b. Ensure that accurate, timely and meaningful financial statements are prepared and presented monthly to the deacons and the church.
- c. Prepare an annual budget for approval by the church and monitor the spending of that budget on a monthly basis.
- d. Maintain adequate levels of cash reserves for unexpected fluctuations in giving in accordance with church cash reserve policies. Study seasonal patterns of budget receipts and disbursements and adjust cash levels accordingly.
- e. Safeguard church assets by implementing and monitoring proper internal controls.
- f. Ensure compliance with all Federal, State and other laws, regulations and reporting requirements.
- g. Have a financial audit performed with an external CPA in accordance with church policy.
- h. Provide the ministerial staff, deacons, and trustees the information needed to understand the church's financial condition.
- i. Oversee the church's financial policies, controls, and procedures. Revise and/or develop new policies, controls and procedures as necessary.

Composition

The membership of the committee shall consist of seven voting members plus a participating, non-voting Financial Secretary. Of the seven members, a minimum of two shall be deacons and the remainder from the church membership at large recommended by the Committee on Committees. The Financial Secretary will support the committee by providing all requested information. A quorum shall consist of five members.

Members shall serve a term of three years; terms shall be staggered so that each year two or three members will complete their terms and be replaced by two or three newly elected members. If a member is unable to fulfill his/her term a replacement shall be nominated by the Committee on Committees to complete the vacant member's term. If a person is elected to complete a term in which less than one year remains, that person may be nominated by the Committee on Committees to serve a full three year term immediately following the service of filling the vacancy, resulting in service of more than three years but less than four years. This is the only instance in which a member may serve more than three consecutive years.

The chairman, or his designee, will preside over the Finance Committee's meeting and present the financial reports and recommendations to the deacon body and the church at business meetings. The pastor and/or other ministerial staff are welcome to attend and may be requested to attend the finance committee meetings to provide spiritual leadership, ministerial objectives and/or information relative to ministries and their related finances and purchases. Ministerial staff and other staff members will assist in the annual budget process.

(F) Mission Committee

Responsibilities

- a. To make studies, receive suggestions, recommend, oversee and administer plans to involve the church in mission action including local, state, and foreign missions in fulfillment of Matthew 28:19-20. Develop new policies, controls and procedures and revise as necessary.
- b. Work with other committees in planning areas of mutual interest and concern.
- c. Make recommendations for special offering and budget mission expenditure recommendations to the Finance Committee.

(G) Personnel Committee

Responsibilities

- a. The purpose is to help the church in matters that relate to personnel administration and management.
- b. Assist in recruiting, interviewing, and recommending new non-ministerial staff as needed.
- c. Assist in the writing of position descriptions which will serve as a guideline for each staff member. This description will outline the position title, principal function, duties or responsibilities, and relationships.
- d. Recommend a salary program for the church to the finance committee. This would include suggesting salaries, expenses, and benefits the church provides for the staff.
- e. Develop policies and procedures concerning all employment issues. This policy will establish a shared responsibility between the committee and the pastor in matters of employment and termination.
- f. If the committee believes a ministerial change is necessary, a report will be given to the deacon officers. If necessary, they will present the concerns to the deacon body for consultation. No ministerial staff will be terminated without church action.

Composition

The membership of the committee shall consist of six members. Members shall serve a term of three years; terms shall be staggered so that each year two members will complete their terms and be replaced by two newly elected members. If a member is unable to fulfill his/her term, a replacement shall be nominated by the Committee on Committees to complete the vacant member's term. If a person is elected to complete a term in which less than one year remains, that person may be nominated by the Committee on Committees to serve a full three year term immediately following the service of filling the vacancy, resulting in service of more than three years but less than four years. This is the only instance in which a member may serve more than three consecutive years.

ARTICLE III. CHURCH PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONS

All organizations of the church shall be under church control. All officers shall be elected by the church and report regularly to the church. It is understood that the pastor, or his designee(s), will serve as an ex officio officer of all the organizations named, and his leadership is to be recognized in them. The church shall provide the human resources, the physical resources, and the financial resources for the appropriate advancement of these programs.

Section 1. Sunday School

The Sunday School shall be the basic organization for the Bible teaching program. Its task shall be to teach persons God's Word, reach people for Bible study, lead persons to commit their lives to Jesus, minister to members and prospects, lead in worship, interpret the work of the church and denomination, and work to develop new teachers. The Sunday School shall be organized by departments and/or classes, as appropriate for all ages, and shall be conducted under the direction of the senior pastor or his designee(s).

Section 2. Church Music

The Church Music Program, under the direction of the Minister of Music, shall strive to educate, train and lead people in worship through music. Its task shall be to provide education and opportunities of service for adult, youth and children through a graded program. It will strive to provide quality music in the church and community. The Church Music Program shall have such officers and organizations as the program requires.

Section 3: Preschool/Children/Youth

The Preschool/Children/Youth Program, which shall operate under the direction of the Sr. Pastor, or his designee(s), is to be the primary organization for evangelism, discipleship, ministry, and mission action for the children and teenagers of the church. Furthermore, this organization shall be a resource for parents in raising children in accordance with biblical teaching. A key focus in the organization is in reaching out to the community, in keeping with the stated purpose of the church, as stated in the Constitution.

Section 4: Young, Median & Senior Adults

The Adult Program, which shall operate under the direction of the Sr. Pastor, or his designee(s), is to be the primary organization for evangelism, discipleship, ministry, and mission action for the adults of the church. A key focus in the organization is in reaching out to the community, in keeping with the stated purpose of the church, as stated in the Constitution.

ARTICLE IV. CHURCH MEETINGS

Section 1. Worship Services

The church shall meet regularly for the worship of Almighty God. Prayer, praise, preaching, instruction, and evangelism shall be among the ingredients of these services. The pastor shall oversee the services for all the church members and for all others who may choose to attend.

Section 2. Regular Business Meetings

The church shall hold regular business meetings monthly on a schedule that shall be determined by the church officers and approved by the church. Changes in the regular business meeting schedule shall be announced in advance. The pastor shall be the moderator of all business meetings. In his absence, the chairman of the deacons shall serve as moderator. In the absence of the chairman of the deacons, the vice chairman of the deacons shall serve.

Section 3. Special Business Meetings

The church may conduct called business meetings to consider matters of special nature and significance. A one-week notice must be given for the specially called business meeting unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical. The notice shall include the subject, the date, time and place; and it must be given in such a manner that all resident members have opportunity to know of the meeting.

Section 4. Parliamentary Rule

In the conduct of meetings of this church, informal, fair and democratic procedure is preferred to legalistic formality whenever practical; however, Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the meetings in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the by-laws of this church.

ARTICLE V. CHURCH FINANCES

Section 1. Source

The sole means of support of the church shall be by the free-will offerings of its members and visitors. All tithes and offerings shall become the property of the church and shall be accounted for by the Finance Committee.

Section 2. Budget

The Finance committee shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by items the amount needed and sought for all local and other expenses. This budget should be presented at least a month prior to the new fiscal year. For the sake of efficiency, the church shall operate on the budget determined, subscribed by the church. A monthly financial report will be made available to the church.

Section 3. Expenditures

All persons seeking supplies, materials, or services shall be required to follow the church financial policy. No expenditure shall be made, even though budgeted, when actual funds do not exist to cover such expenditures.

Section 4. Church Properties

All securities, goods-in-kind, and extraordinary gifts to the church must be reviewed by the Finance Committee and approved by the church. All securities accepted by the church shall be sold immediately unless the church votes otherwise. Extraordinary disbursements and gifts for special funds must be authorized by the church.

Section 5. Fiscal Year

The church fiscal year shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31.

Section 6. Debts

No officer of the Church, committee, organization, or member shall have the power to create a debt or other obligation for the Church outside the budget except for such purposes and in such manner as shall be authorized by a vote of the Church acting in conformity to the provisions of this policy.

Section 7. Audit and Records

The Finance Committee will secure an audit of the financial affairs of the church as needed in accordance with the church policy. Such audit shall be made by a public accountant outside the membership of the Church.

Section 8. Bank Depositories and Withdrawals of Funds

The Finance Committee shall name the depositories in which funds of the Church shall be kept.

ARTICLE VI. CHURCH OPERATIONS MANUAL

The church staff shall compile a Church Operations Manual. It shall be kept in the church office, and available for use there by church members. A staff designee shall maintain the manual. It will contain all policies, procedures and controlling documents. The Church Council shall review the manual at least annually, with authority to recommend changes. Any church member or church organization may initiate suggested changes in the manual to the church council.

In the event that additions, revisions, or deletions to the church operations manual are deemed necessary, the following steps are to be followed: 1) the church officer or organization to whose areas of assignment the policy relates will make a recommendation of the desired change to the deacon body, 2) the deacon body will review the recommendation and, if the suggested change seems appropriate, 3) they will present the revision to the church for review and approval.

ARTICLE VII. ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS

These bylaws shall supersede all other bylaws heretofore in effect. Adoption of these bylaws requires a simple majority vote by the members at two business meetings, one of which must be a regularly scheduled business meeting (see Article IV, Section 2). Upon approval, these bylaws become the governing documents of the church. In the event of a conflict with previously approved policies or procedures, these bylaws shall take precedence.

The Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote and the Bylaws may be amended by a simple majority of those members present and voting in any regular business meeting if those amendments have been published in the official publications of the church and have been read in the preceding regular business meeting. The church shall be given notice in printed form 21 days prior to the vote.

2011-2012 Constitution and Bylaws Committee:

*Spencer Mathews (Chairman), Kevin Johnson, Kathy Mitchell, Matt Rayburn, Alan Stanley
Mark Rotramel (ex officio)*

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