

CONSTITUTION OF BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH

Fairbanks, Alaska

Article 1: Name

The name of this church is Bethel Baptist Church.

Article 2: Address

Physical Address:

1310 Farmers Loop Road
Fairbanks, AK 99709

Mailing Address:

POB 83889
Fairbanks, AK 99708

Article 3: Duration

The duration of this church is perpetual.

Article 4: Purpose

Bethel Baptist Church is a religious corporation and is not organized for the private gain of any person. It is organized under the Nonprofit Religious Corporation Law primarily for religious purposes.

The purpose of this church is to lead people to a growing relationship with Jesus Christ. This is accomplished by:

- Proclaiming among all peoples the gospel of salvation, which is by personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord;
- Worshiping God according to the teachings of the Scriptures;
- Putting into practice the teachings of the Scriptures;
- Sustaining the ordinances and doctrines of the Scriptures.

The priorities of ministry of this church flow from the vision of God's glory revealed in Jesus Christ. These are accomplished by:

- Growing stronger through worship;
- Growing larger through outreach;
- Growing deeper through discipleship;
- Growing together through relationships.

Article 5: Relationships

This church shall maintain affiliation through a covenant relationship with the organizations currently known as the Conservative Baptist Association of Alaska and the Northwest Conservative Baptist Association. In addition it will seek to cooperate with other churches of like faith and practice for the purposes of helping people to trust, follow, and serve Jesus Christ.

Article 6: Doctrinal Statement

I. GOD

There is one God who is the Creator and Ruler of all creation who has eternally existed in three co-eternal, co-equal persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each is distinct in person and function, but one in essence.

II. GOD THE FATHER

We believe in God the Father: one in essence with the Son and the Spirit. He is an infinite, personal Spirit, perfect in all His attributes. He is the Creator, Sustainer, and sovereign Ruler of all things through His Son Jesus Christ.

III. JESUS CHRIST

Jesus Christ is both the Son of God, equal with the Father, and the virgin-born Son of Man. He led a sinless life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for our sins by dying upon a cross. He rose three days later to demonstrate His power over sin and death and as a declaration that He truly was the Son of God. He ascended to heaven's glory and will return again someday to Earth to establish His earthly kingdom and reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

IV. THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is God, equal to the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is present in the world to make us aware of our need for Jesus Christ. He comes to live within those who have placed their trust in Jesus the moment they believe and seals their eternal destiny. He provides the Christian with power for daily living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. He also gifts every believer for service within the Church. As Christians we seek to live under His control daily.

V. THE BIBLE

We believe that God has spoken in the Scriptures, the 66 books of the Protestant Canon, through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged. Therefore, it is to be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all that it promises.

VI. PEOPLE

People are the supreme object of God's creation created in the image of God. We were created to enjoy fellowship with God and fulfill God's will on earth. By an act of rebellion against the express will of God, the original pair became "infected" by sin, which resulted in all mankind inheriting a fallen nature. This

inward inclination toward sin which always leads to acts of rebellion has alienated us from God, resulting in divine condemnation, spiritual death, and physical decay.

VII. SALVATION

Salvation is the gift of God given to those who have placed their trust in Christ. Salvation is a gift because there is nothing we can do to earn it. No religious effort or good work ever qualifies us to receive salvation. Due to our inward inclination and actual acts of rebellion, we are deserving of God's judgment. But God the Father, because of his grace and mercy, sent God the Son to be the sacrifice for our sins by suffering and dying in our place. Those who trust in Christ are declared "not guilty" because their penalty for sin has been paid, and they become children of God.

VIII. THE CHURCH

Jesus Christ is the head of the Church, His body, which is composed of all people who have placed their trust in Christ. We believe that this body expresses itself in local assemblies in which believers are in a covenant relationship. The Scriptures tell us to come together for edification, fellowship, worship, and prayer. The purpose of the Church is to make disciples of all people, always bearing witness to the gospel in word and deed.

IX. THE FUTURE

Jesus will someday return bodily, personally, and visibly to earth to establish his rule and reign, the time known only to the Father. At the end of Christ's 1,000 year reign, all those who have ever existed will be judged. Those who have placed their trust in Christ will spend eternity in the presence of God. Those who have rejected Christ's offer of forgiveness will suffer eternal conscious punishment.

Article 7: Officers

The scriptural officers of this church are the Elders (both Vocational and Lay) and Deacons. The purpose of the officers of the church is to lovingly care for and equip the membership to do the work of the ministry. The Scriptures shall determine their qualifications and responsibilities. The By-laws shall determine their election, term and succession. This church may affirm other officers as deemed necessary and advisable as defined in the By-laws.

Article 8: Membership

The membership of this church shall consist of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ who have been baptized, acknowledged substantial agreement with the faith, practice and covenant of this church, and have been received into the fellowship by regular action of the church.

Article 9: Covenant

Having received the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and having professed our faith through baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we do now, in the

presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

We purpose, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in Christian character; to promote its spiritual and numerical growth; to support its program of worship and discipleship; to participate in its ordinances; and affirm its doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also purpose to live our lives in accordance with the principles and commandments contained in the Scriptures; to maintain family and private devotions; to train our children in the fear and admonition of the Lord; to seek the salvation of our family and friends; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our agreements, and models of godliness in our daily lives; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further purpose to care for one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to assist each other in sickness and distress; to be kind and helpful in what we say to one another; to be slow to take offense, always ready for reconciliation, remembering the instruction of our Savior to secure it without delay.

When we leave this church we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of biblical principles of this covenant.

Article 10: Governance Polity

Under the authority of Jesus Christ and the Word of God, the governance of Bethel Baptist Church is vested in its members.

Article 11: Dissolution of this Church

In the event of the dissolution of this church, the property of this church will be distributed to the organization currently known as the Conservative Baptist Association of Alaska, a nonprofit Conservative Baptist agency. If at the time of dissolution this agency is no longer in existence, the Elders shall redirect the assets to be distributed to the Northwest Conservative Baptist Association, a 501 (c) (3) tax exempt, nonprofit Conservative Baptist agency or one or more 501 (c) (3) tax exempt, nonprofit organizations sharing common doctrinal beliefs and goals.

Article 12: Amendments

This Covenant, Doctrinal Statement, and Constitution may be amended by a three-fourths vote of members present and voting at any business meeting provided:

- The proposed amendment has been submitted in writing three months prior and posted for two weeks preceding the vote;
- A quorum of 40 percent of the voting members is present.

BY-LAWS

Preamble

These By-laws are adopted, ordained, and established for the governing of Bethel Baptist Church and the planning of worship and service to our Lord Jesus Christ. No By-law shall be effective that is contrary to the Articles of Incorporation or the Constitution of this church.

ARTICLE (A)

Membership

Section 1: Qualification of Members

Members of this church shall be those who:

- Have been saved through personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ;
- Have been baptized by immersion subsequent to conversion (see Article D Section 1); In some cases, an exception to the mode of baptism may be granted by an eighty percent affirmative vote by the Elder Board after an interview with the candidate to determine if there is a valid and substantial reason why that individual ought not to be baptized by immersion (e.g. a sincere and strongly-held conviction by the candidate that a subsequent baptism by immersion would, somehow, invalidate his or her previous baptism).
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- Are in substantial agreement with the Doctrinal Statement;
- Have attended BC 101, our membership class that explains what we believe, what we practice, and what we expect of members;
- Commit to the Covenant of the members of Bethel Baptist Church;
- Are received into the fellowship by majority affirmation of the church at a business meeting;
- Are growing in a manner consistent with biblical imperatives

Section 2: Recommendation of Members

Requests for membership shall be made to the Elders. Two or more Elders shall interview prospective members to determine that they meet the qualifications listed in Article A Section 1 and to hear their testimony. After a favorable interview with the Elders the names of the prospective members shall be posted no less than two Sundays prior to the business meeting at which they will be voted upon.

At that business meeting, should a member of the church have any concerns about the qualifications of the candidate who is being recommended for membership, then that member may request that the voting process be postponed for one business meeting so that the member can meet privately with the Elders to state the member's concerns. The final decision of whether to recommend the candidate to the church or not shall be left to the Board of Elders.

Section 3: Classification of Members

- *Members* are believers age 18 and older who meet the requirements of By-laws Article A Sections 1 and 2.
- *Inactive Members* are members who are either not residing in the local area, who are on military deployment, or who are currently unable to attend due to health or similar issues. The privilege of voting will not be accorded inactive members unless they are physically present.
- *Youth Members* are those meeting the requirements of Section 1 and 2 but are less than 18 years old.

Only physically present members and physically present inactive members will constitute the voting members at any business meeting; and these are the only two categories that count toward meeting a quorum requirement. The total of all active members not including Youth Members shall be used to determine quorum requirements at any business meeting. Proxy voting shall not be permitted.

Section 4: Termination and Reclassification of Membership

Membership status may be terminated or reclassified in the following circumstances:

- By death.
- By resignation: As received in writing by the Board of Elders.
- By erasure or change of classification: The Board of Elders may remove or reclassify members who have not remained in contact with Bethel Baptist Church for six months or more. An effort shall be made by the Elders to contact these members before termination or reclassification of membership. Additionally, an inactive member's status may be changed back to normal member status at any time with a majority affirmative vote by the Elder board.
- By disciplinary action: Membership may be terminated for conduct unbecoming a Christian, adopting an aberrant or heretical belief, or for any other cause that promotes discord and injures the unity and effectiveness of the church. Such misconduct shall be dealt with in accordance with Article A Section 5--Church Discipline.

Section 5: Church Discipline

The goal of church discipline is to restore a person to proper fellowship with Jesus and this congregation. Church discipline can be directed toward either members or non-members who are regular attenders.

- *Discipline for Public Offense*-- The responsibility of discipline in all cases of public offense shall rest with the Board of Elders.
- *Discipline for Private Offense*-- Cases of grievances between members shall be dealt with in accordance with the principles laid down in Matthew 18:15-17. Should the first two steps of Matthew 18:15-17 fail, then charges brought to the church shall be submitted in writing to the Elder Board for appropriate action.
- *A Fair Hearing*-- In all cases of discipline, the accused shall be given an opportunity to be heard in defense first with the Elder Board and, if necessary, with the membership.

- *Recommendation for Termination of Membership*-- Any termination of membership shall be brought by the Board of Elders at any business meeting, and requires a two-thirds majority vote of the membership at any business meeting. The Elder Board may choose to exclude a member from fellowship and duties until the vote occurs. Notification of termination of membership shall be by letter from the Board of Elders.
- *Exclusion or discipline of non-members*-- Discipline or exclusion of a non-member may be at the discretion of the Board of Elders.

Section 6: Duties of Members

It shall be the duty of each member of Bethel Baptist Church to keep the covenant obligation set forth in the Constitution and assist fellow members in keeping theirs.

ARTICLE (B)

Officers and Officer Boards

Church boards are groups of officers who direct or supervise some defined activity. Standing boards are: Elder, Deacon, Business, Facilities, Mission, Fellowship and Advisory.

Individual officers include: Elder (either Senior Pastor, Associate Pastor or Lay Elder), Deacon, Business Officer, Facility Officer, Missions Officer, Fellowship Officer, Moderator and Treasurer.

Only voting members shall be eligible to hold office unless otherwise specified in the Constitution or By-laws.

Listing of official offices for the Alaska state non-profit bi-annual report shall be: the Senior Pastor shall be listed as the President, the Chairman of the Elder Board shall be listed as the Vice President. The Moderator shall be listed as the Secretary. The Treasurer shall be listed as the Treasurer. The Chairperson of the Business Board, the Chairperson of the Facility Board and one Elder shall comprise the three Director positions. The Elder filling the third Director position shall be selected by majority vote of the Elder Board.

The manner of election: All officers, except Senior Pastor and Associate Pastors, shall be elected from the membership of the church by ballot upon a majority vote. They shall assume their duties on May 1st, and shall serve for a period of two years, their term expiring on April 30th, unless otherwise provided in these By-laws.

All unpaid office, board, and committee positions shall become vacant by the occupant's resignation, disqualification from membership in this church, death, or removal from office because of failure to perform adequately his/her covenant obligations or the duties assigned to him/her. Removal from office shall be by majority vote of all ballots cast at any business meeting. When such vacancies occur, the Nominating Committee shall convene in a timely manner to submit to the church nominations to fill unexpired vacancies of six months or more.

Following the annual business meeting of the church each board, (with the exception of the Advisory Board), shall convene for organization, for elections of a chairperson and a secretary and determination of individual board member responsibilities. Boards may form internal committees for temporary purposes that fall within their scope of duties. Internal committees in question shall be answerable to the board that created them.

Each board shall maintain minutes from each board meeting. A copy of their minutes shall be sent to the Office Manager for archiving on a quarterly basis. Each board member shall have access to read past minutes from his or her particular board. Elders shall have access to read all past minutes from all boards and committees.

Each board shall meet regularly; for most boards that will be monthly. The Advisory Board meets on a very infrequent basis, typically once a year in January to recommend people to serve on the Nominating Committee. Boards meet at the call of the Senior Pastor or the chairperson of that board or, in the interim between Senior Pastors, by the call of the Moderator. A majority percentage of board members is necessary for a quorum to do business.

Prior to presenting a recommendation to the church on matters affecting policy, the recommendation must first receive a majority vote within the board itself.

An officer may opt to recuse him or herself from a vote or discussion due to a conflict of interest. Additionally, a board, by majority vote, may recuse any officer of a board from a discussion or vote when there is a perceived conflict of interest. The person in question shall not participate in the vote for recusal.

Section 1: Elders

The Elder Board shall consist of all Vocational Elders plus six Lay Elders. All Elders shall be male and shall fulfill the requirements of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. Furthermore, all Elders must have been baptized by immersion subsequent to conversion. Accusations against any Elder shall be handled in accordance with 1 Timothy 5:19-20. Accusations shall be submitted in writing to the Elder board for appropriate action. The duties of the Elders shall be to oversee the spiritual welfare of the church through:

1. Spending time in prayer and time in the Word;
2. Providing vision and direction to the church;
3. Assuring that goals and strategies are established to carry out the vision and direction of the church;
4. Protecting the church from heretical and aberrant teachings and practices;
5. Teaching/education;
6. Overseeing corporate worship;
7. Overseeing communion and baptism;
8. Overseeing the policies and work of the church;

9. Shepherding and providing biblical counsel;
10. Interviewing prospective members;
11. Initiating pastoral search when needed per Article C Section 2 below;
12. Liaising with the boards and committees of the church;
13. Ensuring that the ministry needs of particular demographics (e.g. men's, women's, military, etc.) are addressed;
14. Overseeing the distribution of the Benevolence Fund.

a. Lay Elders shall be elected by an eighty percent vote of members present and voting. Their term shall be for three years. Approximately one third of the board shall be elected each year. At the expiration of the individual's second consecutive term of office they shall be ineligible for election to the Elder Board for one year. Persons who fill an un-expired vacancy of office of less than eighteen months shall not have that initial un-expired term count against the maximum number of consecutive terms they may serve.

b. Vocational Elders (including Senior Pastor and Associate Pastors):

1. The Senior Pastor shall be an Elder amongst Elders, a leader, a teacher, a shepherd, and a guide of the church. He shall perform all of the scriptural and necessary duties of the pastoral office. He shall be an *ex officio*¹ member of all boards, committees and auxiliary organizations of the church. The Senior Pastor shall be immediately responsible to the Elder Board and ultimately responsible to the membership. His job description shall be determined by the Elder Board with the affirmation of the membership.
2. Each Associate Pastor shall supervise, develop, promote, and administer his designated ministry area in cooperation with the Senior Pastor, other staff, and the Elders. He shall be immediately responsible to the Senior Pastor, secondarily to the Elder board and ultimately to the Membership. The job description for each position shall be determined by the Elders with the affirmation of the membership.
3. Each Vocational Elder shall hold to the Doctrinal Statement of this church and commit to the covenant of Bethel Baptist Church.
4. Each Vocational Elder shall have training and practical experience sufficient to equip him for his assigned responsibilities.
5. Upon a vacancy of any Vocational Elder position, the Elder Board shall carefully select a list of nominees for election to the Pastoral Search Committee that shall

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By virtue of office or position; an *ex officio* member is an equal member with all the rights, responsibilities, and privileges of other members.

be representative of the various ministries of the church. In a quarterly or special business meeting the membership shall elect from this list of nominees a Pastoral Search Committee of five members. Two of the five elected members to this committee shall be Elders.

6. Each Pastor and his spouse will automatically become members of the church upon their acceptance of the position, arrival, and signing the contract.
7. Any action to terminate a Pastor shall be presented to the church by the Elders at any quarterly or special business meeting called for that purpose. A quorum of one half of the voting membership is required and a two-thirds majority of members present and voting shall be necessary to make such action valid. Public notice of this business meeting shall be given on at least two consecutive Sundays preceding the meeting. By majority vote of the Elder Board the Elders may also choose to immediately suspend the Pastor's duties with pay until the vote has occurred.
8. In the event that the Elders fail to bring a grievance against a Pastor to the membership for a vote of termination, the question of termination may be brought to the membership directly by a petition stating the reasons for the grievance and signed by not less than twenty-five percent of the voting members. In response to the petition, the Moderator shall call a special business meeting for this purpose in a timely manner. Public notice of this business meeting shall be given on at least two consecutive Sundays preceding the meeting. A quorum of one half of the voting membership is required and a two-thirds majority of members present and voting shall be necessary to terminate.

Section 2: Deacons

The Deacon Board shall consist of six Deacons (either male or female) who shall meet the requirements of 1 Timothy 3:8- 13.

The office of Deacon exists to assist the Elders in duties that would divert them from the ministry of the Word and prayer and the general, visionary oversight of the church. Specific duties of the Deacon Board shall include:

1. Assisting the Elders upon request in the distribution of the benevolence fund and in follow-up member care.
2. Assisting the Elders with member care and physical helps. Actively identifying needs within the congregation. Coordinating with the TLC Facilitator.
3. Organizing the preparation and distribution of the Lord's Supper.

Section 3: Business Officers

The Business Board shall consist of five Business Officers, selected for their Christ-like character and demonstrated business ability, plus the Treasurer and a paid Business Manager. All paid employees, other than Business Manager, and first-degree family members of all paid employees, are prohibited from serving as a Business Officer.

Collectively, Business Officers are the agents for Bethel Baptist Church in regards to the financial and other business activities of the church.

Duties of the Business Board include:

1. They shall be responsible for overseeing the financial health of the church. They shall have charge of the property and all temporalities of the church but shall not sell, mortgage, or otherwise encumber the real estate or other titled property of the church without consent of two-thirds of the members of the church present at a quarterly or special business meeting;
2. They shall be responsible for the designation of a financial institution for the banking needs of the church;
3. They shall appoint one or more voting members to serve as Financial Secretaries who shall:
 - Receive and deposit all monies in the designated financial institution in a timely manner;
 - Give deposit slips to the Bookkeeper in a timely manner;
 - Keep accounts of all giving by individual contributor;
 - Distribute year-end giving statements to each contributor;
 - Carry out other financial tasks as instructed by the Business Board.

Existing administrative staff may be appointed to serve in the capacity of Financial Secretaries as part of their regular duties with approval by the Senior Pastor;

4. They shall oversee and coordinate the duties of the Treasurer;
5. They shall designate at least two Business Officers to be check signers (in addition to the Treasurer);
6. They shall have custody of the Bethel Baptist Church corporate seal;
7. They shall acquaint themselves with applicable state and federal laws and see that such laws are faithfully obeyed in all matters affecting this church;
8. They shall plan for the raising, collecting, and safeguarding of the funds needed by the church and shall encourage the congregation to enter into its financial support;
9. They shall, in consultation with the various boards and committees, submit a proposed budget at the January business meeting. The Business Board shall monitor budget compliance;
10. They shall have power to hire, fire and oversee one or more bookkeepers or other financial assistants, recommend their salaries and determine their duties;

11. After the annual budget has been passed, they shall present to the Elder Board for consideration any proposed budget amendments exceeding five thousand dollars.

Section 4: Facilities Officers

The Facilities Board shall consist of five Facilities Officers, selected for their Christ-like character and demonstrated ability to oversee the upkeep of facilities, who shall oversee the maintenance and repair of church grounds, facility and other property.

Duties of the Facilities Board include:

1. Oversight of the facilities and grounds to ensure that they meet the needs of the ministries of Bethel Baptist Church. The Facilities Officers will make sure that our facilities meet necessary code requirements. They shall take action to ensure that repairs are made when necessary and recommend improvements to the facilities and grounds to make them safer, more appealing or more efficient;
2. Oversight of periodic church-wide maintenance projects;
3. Arranging for the setting up and taking down of a baptismal as needed;
4. Arranging for snow removal and other recurring or seasonal facility needs;
5. Assistance in the execution of building/grounds expansion and/or improvement projects in coordination with any committees created for those purposes;
6. Hiring, firing and oversight of one or more caretakers and/or janitors, the recommendation of their salaries and determination of their duties;
7. Approving or denying requests made by non-Bethel sponsored groups, ministries or individuals for use of church building, grounds or equipment.
8. Overseeing the physical security of the church facility, including locking up after Sunday worship.

Section 5: Missions Officers

The Missions Board shall consist of six Missions Officers, selected for their Christ-like character and their interest in or participation with missions, who shall promote missions consistent with the vision of the church in coordination with the Elders and other ministries of Bethel Baptist Church. The Missions Policy provides guidance to the board to accomplish their tasks.

Section 6: Fellowship Officers

The Fellowship Board shall consist of six members gifted in the areas of helps or hospitality who will recruit volunteers from the congregation to accomplish the following duties:

1. Event Planning—including potlucks, picnics, holiday parties and other get-togethers for the purposes of church fellowship and integration of church visitors into the church body;
2. Provide refreshments for fellowship times associated with regular worship services;
3. Decoration of church facilities during holidays and for special events;
4. Keeping the kitchen stocked with all necessary supplies and keeping inventory of equipment and other items in the kitchen.

Section 7: Moderator

The Moderator shall officiate at all business and Advisory Board meetings of the church and ensure that they are conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order.

The Moderator shall ensure that the following duties are carried out by the current Office Manager or an alternate in his or her absence:

- Keeping minutes of each business and/or Advisory Board meeting;
- Keeping a complete alphabetical and chronological record of the date and manner of admission and dismissal of members;
- Maintaining permanent records of all business meetings.

In the absence of the Moderator during a business or Advisory Board meeting the order of his/her alternate shall be first the Chairman of the Elder Board, then the Chairperson of the Business Board except by unanimous agreement of an alternate moderator among the Moderator and the Chairpersons of the Elders and Business Board.

The Moderator shall ensure that at the January business meeting two members are elected to perform a review of church financial books and prepare a report for the annual meeting.

Section 8: Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be selected for his/her integrity and proven ability to handle finances. The Treasurer shall be an ex-officio member of the Business Board. The Treasurer shall oversee each disbursement request under his/her care to ensure that the request is from an authorized member for any given budget block or designated fund which has sufficient funds. Payments from funds in the custody of the Treasurer shall be made only by check signed by him/her or another authorized person.

Additionally, the Treasurer shall oversee the Bookkeeper who shall have the responsibilities of:

- Submitting reports to the Treasurer for the quarterly business meetings;
- Maintaining an accounting of each budget line item and designated line item;
- Preparing the bimonthly and monthly payrolls;

- Preparing all checks in a timely fashion for the Treasurer to sign and disburse;
- Providing information as requested by the chairperson of any board or committee.

Section 9: Advisory Board

The Advisory Board shall consist of all elected officers of the church and Vocational Elders. It shall meet at the call of the Senior Pastor, the Chairman of the Elder Board, or the Chairperson of the Business Board. A majority of the total number of officers shall constitute a quorum.

It shall be the duty of the Advisory Board to confer relative to the general interest of the church and to advise the Senior Pastor, the Chairman of the Elder Board, or the Chairperson of the Business Board on any matter that the one calling the Advisory Board together may bring before it.

When conferring relative to the general interest of the church, all recommendations to the church shall be written in the form of a motion for consideration at the next business meeting.

At each January business meeting the Advisory Board shall present to the church a list of nominees for the Nominating Committee.

ARTICLE (C)

Standing Committees and other Ministries

Section 1: Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall consist of at least five voting members elected by the church from nominations submitted by the Advisory Board at the January business meeting. Two members of the Nominating Committee shall be elders.

The purpose of the Nominating Committee is to nominate candidates for church offices after consideration of candidates in light of scriptural, constitutional and By-law qualifications. Discussions about candidates shall be confidential. The committee shall prepare a list of nominees for each elective office which shall be posted in the church at least two Sundays before the business meeting when the election will occur.

For each office that has an unexpired vacancy of less than six months, the board in question shall determine if the remaining part of the term in question must be filled prior to the expiration of the term.

Specific guidelines for nominations include:

1. The committee shall seek recommendations from the current boards and/or current office holders.

2. The committee shall consider any candidate for any office presented to them by a member. Names shall be submitted to the Nominating Committee at least four weeks prior to the election.
3. Nominees for the office of Lay Elder shall not exceed the number of vacancies and shall be presented to the church without the option of nominations from the floor. For Lay Elders there must be an eighty percent affirmative vote of members voting.
4. Nominating Committee members shall refrain from nominating or voting for their first-degree relatives.
5. Nominees must be contacted and must give their consent prior to their names being submitted to the church thereby indicating that they are willing to enter into and discharge all the duties of the office as set forth in the Constitution and By-laws.

Only those nominees who have a majority vote within the Nominating Committee shall be presented to the church.

Nominations may be made from the floor for all elected offices except those of Elder.

The Nominating Committee shall report on the status of any vacant positions at each quarterly business meeting.

Section 2: Pastoral Search Committee

Upon a vacancy in the office of a Vocational Elder (a Senior or Associate Pastor), the Elder Board shall carefully select a list of nominees from the church membership which is representative of the church. In a quarterly or special business meeting the membership shall elect from this list of nominees a Pastoral Search Committee of five members. Two of the five elected members to this committee shall be Elders.

The Pastoral Search Committee, when elected, shall organize by designating a chairperson and a secretary. The secretary shall keep a record of the minutes of the committee meetings and do the official correspondence. All members of the Pastoral Search Committee shall be pledged to refrain from revealing any details of the deliberations of the committee.

The duties of the committee shall be to thoroughly explore the field for candidates who are available to call and whose doctrinal position is in keeping with the faith and the practice of this church.

The committee shall thoroughly investigate each prospective candidate as to his spiritual, educational, and theological qualifications to serve the needs of this pastorate. The committee shall only bring one applicant before the church to candidate at a time, and only by unanimous consent of the committee. The Pastoral Search Committee shall then call a special business meeting to consider the call of the pastoral candidate.

An eighty percent affirmative vote shall be necessary for the election of a Vocational Elder. Following the election by the church of a Vocational Elder, the Elder Board, in

cooperation with the Business Officers, shall send a letter setting forth the terms of the call. The call is complete when final acceptance is received from the prospective pastor.

The Elder Board shall be responsible for supplying speakers during the interim between Senior Pastors, though the Elders may, if the action is deemed necessary, request the Pastoral Search Committee to secure the services of an interim Senior Pastor who shall not be considered a candidate for the pastorate.

Section 3: Other Ministries

Unless otherwise provided for in the Constitution and By-laws, all unpaid posts, positions and ministries shall be under the governance of the Elder Board regarding their startup, purposes, maintenance, accountability and termination.

The governance of all paid posts and positions of Bethel Baptist Church shall be dealt with in accordance with the Employee Handbook.

ARTICLE (D)

Standing Practices

Section 1: Worship and Ordinances

Meetings shall be held for public worship on a regular basis. The church may by official action through the Elder Board arrange the date, place, and time of any meeting for public worship. Special meetings for the purpose of promoting evangelism, Bible study, missionary work, etc. may be held upon the recommendations of the Elder Board.

The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall ordinarily be observed on the first Sunday of each month.

The ordinance of Baptism shall only be performed subsequent to a believer's profession of faith in Christ for the forgiveness of their sins. Baptism shall be performed by immersion except in extreme cases (e.g. physical disability) in which baptism by immersion is either impossible or highly impracticable, as determined by an eighty percent affirmative vote of the Elder Board.

Section 2: Business Meetings

All business meetings shall be held on the property of Bethel Baptist Church.

The annual business meeting will be held on the last Wednesday of April. Other scheduled business meetings will be held the last Wednesday of October and on the last Wednesday of January.

Notice of any business meetings shall be provided to the members at least two Sundays in advance.

Special business meetings may be called by the Moderator or Elder Board with notification of at least two Sundays in advance.

A quorum for a business meeting shall consist of thirty percent of voting members unless otherwise stated in the Constitution or By-laws.

Roberts Rules of Order are hereby adopted to govern all business meetings.

The order of business for regular business meetings held in April, October, and January shall include: approval of minutes from the previous business meeting, approval of the agenda, voting on new members (if applicable), reports (of officers - including treasurer, Boards, and active Committees and other ministries), election of officers (if applicable), unfinished business, new business and member comments.

In the event a business meeting is unable to be held due to circumstances beyond the control of the church (for example natural disasters, pandemic, act of war, or government restrictions), emergency powers are granted to the Elder Board to make decisions that otherwise would require membership approval. At the next business meeting which can be held, those decisions are to be ratified or changed by the membership

Section 3: Church Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of this church shall begin on April 1st and close on March 31st. Full financial reports shall be made at the annual business meeting.

Section 4: Licensing and Ordaining

Upon employment, Vocational Elders shall be considered licensed to perform marriages and carry out other ceremonial duties as long as their employment continues at Bethel Baptist Church. The Elder Board shall determine procedures and practices for ordaining individuals on an as-needed basis. These procedures and practices shall be in accordance with the practices of the Conservative Baptist Association.

ARTICLE (E)

Amendments

These By-laws may be repealed, amended, or added to at the annual or any other business meeting of the church, called for that purpose, by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present and voting, provided that the proposed amendment is in writing and posted at least two Sundays in advance. No By-law shall be amended or adopted that conflicts with or voids any provisions of the Constitution.