

# BARNWELL BAPTIST CHURCH CONSTITUTION

## PREAMBLE

The membership of this church, in unity, adopts the following By-Laws for the church's guidance. We declare and establish this Constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith, the liberties of each individual church member and to govern the body in an orderly manner.

## NAME

This body shall be known as Barnwell Baptist Church located at 7780 US Hwy 98 Fairhope, AL 36532.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of Barnwell Baptist Church is to exalt our Lord in all we do. As a united body of believers and under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, we will strive to be a growing, loving, and reaching church.

Growing - To help believers grow in their relationship and commitment to the Lordship of Jesus Christ through worship, service, ministries, and Bible study.

Loving - To extend unselfish Christ-like love to others in the community and the world through the inspiration of our Lord.

Reaching - To spread the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ to as many people as possible under the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

## DECLARATION OF FAITH

The Scriptures – The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God and are the only sufficient, certain, and authoritative rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience.

God – There is but one God, the Maker, Preserver, and Ruler of all things having in and of Himself all perfection and being infinite. To Him all creatures owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience.

The Trinity – God is revealed to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each with distinct, personal attributes but without division of nature, essence or being.

Providence – God from eternity decrees or permits all things that come to pass and perpetually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and all events. God is not the approver of sin, nor does He destroy the free will and responsibility of mankind.

Election – Election is God's eternal and gracious gift to persons of everlasting life – not because of foreseen merit in them but of His mercy in Christ – in consequence of which choice they are called, justified, and glorified. God's gift of salvation to all who believe and accept is only possible because the atonement of Christ is sufficient for all.

Fall of Man – God originally created man in His own image and free from sin; however, through the temptation of Satan; he transgressed the command of God, fell from his original holiness and righteousness. Man inherits a nature corrupt and opposed to God's law and is consequently under condemnation for transgressions.

Mediator – Jesus Christ, the only son of God, is the divinely appointed Mediator between God and man. Having taken upon Himself human nature, yet without sin, He perfectly fulfilled the law; suffered and died upon the cross for the salvation of all sinners. He was buried, rose on the third day, and ascended to His Father at whose right hand He lives to make intercession for His people. He is the only Mediator, the Prophet, Priest, King of the Church, and Sovereign of the Universe.

Regeneration – Regeneration is a change of heart, wrought by the Holy Spirit, who convicts of sin, calls to salvation, enlightens the mind spiritually, brings understanding of the Word of God, and renews the nature, so that believers may love and practice holiness. It is a work of God's free and special grace alone.

Repentance – Repentance is an evangelical grace, wherein a person being, by the Holy Spirit, made sensible of the evil of his sin, humbles himself with godly sorrow with a purpose and endeavor to walk before God as to please Him in all things.

Faith – Saving faith is the belief, on God's authority, of whatever is revealed in His word concerning Christ, accepting and resting upon Him alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life. It is wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, and is accompanied by all saving graces, and leads to a life of holiness.

Justification – Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal of sinners, who believe in Christ, providing full satisfaction of sin on account of the obedience and sacrifice of Christ.

Sanctification – Those who have been regenerated are also sanctified by God's Word and Spirit dwelling in them. This sanctification is progressive through the supply of divine strength, which all saints seek to obtain, being set apart to press after a heavenly life in obedience to Christ.

Perseverance of the Saints – Those whom God has accepted in the Beloved and sanctified by His Spirit will never totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere to the end. Though they fall through neglect and temptation into sin, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, bring reproach on the Church, and temporal judgments on themselves; they shall be renewed again unto repentance, and be kept by the power of God through faith unto Salvation.

The Church – The Lord Jesus is the head of the church, which is composed of all His true disciples, and in Him is invested supremely all power for its government. According to His commandment, Christians are to associate themselves into particular churches and to each of these churches is given needful authority for administering that order, training, and worship which He has appointed. The regular officers of a church are trustees and deacons.

Baptism – Baptism is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus, obligatory upon every believer, wherein he is immersed in the water in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. It is a sign of fellowship with the death and resurrection of Christ, of remission of sin, and of giving of oneself to God to live and walk in newness of life. It is prerequisite to church membership and the participation in the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper – The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of Jesus Christ to be observed by His churches until the end of the world. It is in no sense a sacrifice, but is designated to commemorate His death, to confirm the faith of Christians, and to be a bond, pledge, and renewal of their commitment to Him, and of their church fellowship.

The Lord's Day – The Lord's Day is a Christian institution for regular observance and should be employed in exercise of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private, resting from worldly employment, works of necessity and mercy only expected.

Liberty of Conscience – God alone is Lord of the conscience. He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of man, which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Civil authorities being ordained of God, subjection in all lawful things commanded by them ought to be yielded by us in the Lord.

The Resurrection – The bodies of men after death return to dust, but their spirits return immediately to God; the righteous to rest with Him; the wicked to be reserved under darkness to the Judgment. At the last day, the bodies of the dead, both just and unjust will be raised.

The Judgment – God has appointed a day, wherein He will judge the world by Jesus Christ, when everyone shall receive according to his deeds; the wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment; the righteous unto everlasting life.

Reference page 11 for Declaration of Faith supporting scripture.

## CHURCH COVENANT

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

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

We also engage to maintain congregational, family and private devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to avoid any and all actions which would compromise or damage our witness and example to the lost, and to other Christians, so all we do will be done to the glory of God; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our actions; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the teachings of our Savior.

## GOVERNMENT

The government of Barnwell Baptist Church is vested in its members under the headship of Jesus Christ. It recognizes the need for mutual counsel and cooperation. The membership retains the right of exclusive self-government in all phases of its life and organization. This church will cooperate and mutually work with the local and state associations.

## DOCTRINE

The Holy Scripture shall be the authority and guide in all matters of faith and practice.

# BARNWELL BAPTIST CHURCH BY-LAWS

## ARTICLE I CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

### 1. Qualification:

The membership of Barnwell Baptist Church shall consist of anyone who has made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and who has been scripturally baptized by immersion, and is in agreement with the Declaration of Faith, and Covenant of the church.

### 2. Candidates:

Any person, having affirmed their personal relationship with Jesus Christ, may be presented for membership in this church at any business meeting in one of the following ways:

- (a) Public profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and baptism by immersion as a symbol of their commitment to Christ;
- (b) Transfer of church letter from another Baptist church of like faith and order; or
- (c) Statement of faith and their prior experience of conversion and scriptural baptism by immersion in another evangelical church of like faith and order.

### 3. Duties:

Members are expected to be faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian life; to attend regularly the services of this church; to give faithfully for its support and causes; and to share in its organized work.

### 4. Rights:

Members in good standing shall have the right to a voice and vote in all church transactions and shall have the right and privileges to full participation in the life and work of the church.

### 5. Discipline:

- (a) It shall be the practice of this church to emphasize to its membership that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The pastor, other members of the church staff and deacons are available for counsel and guidance. The attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption rather than punishment.
- (b) Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, the pastor and the deacons will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accordance with Matthew 18:15-17 and Galatians 6:1-2. If it becomes necessary for the church to take action to exclude a member, a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the members present is required.

The church may proceed to declare the person to no longer be a member. A spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance shall prevail in all such proceedings.

6. Termination:

Membership shall be terminated according to the policies of this church in the following ways:

- (a) Death of the member;
- (b) Transfer of letter to another church;
- (c) Exclusion by action of church discipline; or
- (d) Notification of membership in another church.

## ARTICLE II CHURCH OFFICERS AND STAFF

All church officers and staff must be members of the church in good standing. Responsibilities of each may be amended in the form of a job description. The church may add or remove staff as needed.

1. Clerk:

The clerk shall be elected by the church annually and shall keep an accurate record of all regular and special business meetings; a copy of which shall be kept on file at the church office.

2. Treasurer:

The treasurer shall be custodian of all finances and should supervise and assist in the receiving, accounting, disbursing and reporting of all monies and gifts to the church. The treasurer shall keep, at all times, an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements and shall render a monthly, quarterly and annual written report of this account to the church.

3. Trustees:

- (a) The trustees shall consist of five (5) active members, elected by the church, to hold in trust the property of the church. They shall serve a term of five (5) years with one (1) member rotating off every year to be replaced by a new member. A member shall be eligible for re-election after remaining off for one (1) year.
- (b) The trustees shall, as provided by law and on behalf of the church, sign any and all legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or lease of church property or any other legal documents requiring a signature. Any such transaction will require a specific vote of the church authorizing the action.

## ARTICLE III PASTOR

### 1. Qualifications:

Qualifications for a pastor shall be consistent with those listed in 1Timothy 3:1-7. The pastor must possess the training, skills, and experience as deemed necessary by the church.

### 2. Responsibilities:

- (a) The pastor's responsibilities shall include but not be limited to: preaching, teaching, Pastoral counseling, administration, planning, and guiding the church to grow and fulfill its purposes and mission.
- (b) The pastor shall lead the church, the organizations, and all leaders of the church in performing their tasks in worship, proclamation, education, evangelism and ministry.
- (c) The pastor is the spiritual leader of the church and gives special attention to the spiritual needs of the members.
- (d) The pastor shall administer the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
- (e) The pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all church committees, except the Pastor Search Committee.
- (f) The pastor shall serve as moderator of the church in all business meetings except in matters in which he is personally involved.
- (g) When the pastor anticipates being absent from the pulpit, he shall notify the deacons and, if necessary, they shall assist him in securing a suitable pulpit supply.

### 3. Call:

- (a) In the event of the absence of the pastor by reason of serious illness or other emergencies, or in the event of a vacancy in the office of pastor, a Search Committee shall be formed to secure an interim pastor.
- (b) A Pastor Search Committee shall be appointed by the church to seek a suitable pastor. This committee shall consist of not less than three (3) and not more than five (5) members.
- (c) This committee shall report to the congregation with a monthly progress report.
- (d) The Pastor Search Committee will recommend only one (1) candidate at a time. This committee's recommendation will serve as a nomination at a special called business meeting. The nominee shall then come before the congregation in view of a call.
- (e) An affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of those present is necessary for the call of a new Pastor.

### 4. Terms of Service:

The pastor shall serve until the relationship is terminated by either his request or that of the church. In either case, at least a sixty (60) day notice shall be given unless otherwise mutually agreed upon.

## ARTICLE IV DEACONS

### 1. Qualifications:

- (a) A deacon must be a servant of the Lord and meet the qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and shall be a professing Christian and a member of this church for a minimum of one (1) year.
- (b) A deacon is expected to fulfill the duties of the Deaconship. He must attend church regularly, participate in its activities, faithfully tithe and attend regular monthly deacon meetings.
- (c) A deacon must demonstrate an exemplary Christian testimony in his private, family, and public life. He must be a committed Christian leader and partner of the pastor and must support and promote the church faith, practice, programs, and ministries.

### 2. Election:

- (a) When a deacon vacancy occurs, the chairman of the deacons shall announce the vacancy to the church body.
- (b) At any regular or special business meeting nominations will be taken from the membership present.
- (c) Once nominations are received and reviewed, the deacons shall conduct an interview with the top candidate(s) to explain the duties, qualifications, and importance of the office of a deacon.
- (d) A candidate recommendation by a majority of the deacon body will be put before the church for a vote to fill the vacant position.

### 3. Term of Office:

- (a) Deacons shall be elected for a term of service of five (5) years. There shall be a minimum of five (5) deacons for the first 100 resident members and one (1) deacon for each additional fifty (50) members or portion thereof. The number of deacons shall be determined by the church as deemed necessary.
- (b) Deacons shall serve on a rotational basis. Each calendar year the assigned term of office of 1/5 of the deacons will expire and nominations and an election shall be held to fill the vacancies.
- (c) Any inactive deacon who has been ordained and out of active rotation for one (1) year may be eligible for re-election.
- (d) A deaconship may be revoked by specific church discipline or upon the deacon's request to be relieved of his church responsibilities as a deacon.

### 4. Ordination:

Ordination shall be conducted according to the customs and practices of this church. If the deacon candidate has been previously ordained by another church of like faith and order, his ordination shall be recognized and accepted by this church.

5. Duties:

In accordance with the meaning of the work and practice in the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. Their task is to serve with the pastor and staff in performing the pastoral ministries. They shall assist in leading the church in the achievement of its mission, proclaiming the gospel to believers and unbelievers, and caring for the church's members and other persons within the community.

6. Deacon Emeritus:

Deacons who have faithfully served but are no longer able to fulfill their responsibilities due to age or health restrictions may be honored by the church with the distinction of Deacon Emeritus. The distinction of Deacon Emeritus must come as a recommendation from the active deacons and be elected by majority vote of those present at a church business meeting. A Deacon Emeritus is relieved of the normal responsibilities of a deacon; however at his own discretion is welcome to attend any meetings of the deacons and exercise full voting rights.

## ARTICLE V CHURCH ORDINANCES

1. Baptism:

This church shall receive for baptism any person who publicly professes Jesus Christ as Savior and indicates a commitment to follow Christ as their Lord.

(a) Baptism shall be by immersion in water.

(b) The pastor, or whomever the church shall authorize, shall administer baptism. The deacons shall assist in preparation and the observance of baptism.

(c) Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service of the church. Baptism may also be administered in the home, hospital, or nursing home when health prevents the candidate from attending a regular worship service.

2. The Lord's Supper:

The church shall periodically observe the Lord's Supper as an integral part of worship. The pastor and deacons shall administer the Lord's Supper. The deacons will be responsible for the physical preparations.

## ARTICLE VI CHURCH COMMITTEES

The church shall utilize committees for the purpose of making recommendations and carrying out the work of the church. The church may establish or dissolve committees as the church deems necessary.

(a) Church committee members will be elected upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee and approval of the church. Each committee shall have a minimum of three (3) committee members with at least one (1), whenever possible, who has served on the committee the previous year.



- (b) Any vacancy that occurs during the term shall be filled through the nomination process to complete the unexpired term.
- (c) Each committee shall elect a chairperson at the beginning of each term.
- (d) Committees shall report any activities and recommendations to the church during regular or special business meetings.
- (e) The Nominating Committee shall publish an updated list of committees and responsibilities each year.

## ARTICLE VII FINANCIAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE

### 1. Budget:

The church treasurer and the Finance Committee shall prepare and submit to the church for approval a proposed budget no later than October 30 preceding the fiscal year. A minimum of two (2) weeks prior to discussion and voting, printed copies of the proposed budget shall be made available. The church treasurer and the Finance Committee shall be responsible for monitoring all expenditures.

### 2. Procedures:

All funds received for any and all purposes shall pass through the hands of the church treasurer, or church financial secretary, and be properly recorded in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

### 3. Fiscal Year:

The church fiscal year shall be from January 1 through December 31.

## ARTICLE VIII CHURCH WORSHIP

The church shall provide services for the worship of God; for praise, preaching, instruction and evangelism on each Sunday morning and evening. Wednesday night shall be designated for prayer and Bible study. Church services will be open for all who choose to attend and shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor or his designee.

## ARTICLE IX CHURCH BUSINESS MEETINGS

### 1. Quarterly Business Meetings:

Quarterly business meetings shall be held on the third Sunday of the month following the fiscal quarter. If a meeting needs to be postponed, an announcement will be made by the pastor or chairman of deacons.

2. Special Business Meetings:

The church may conduct special called business meetings to consider matters of special nature and significance.

3. Notice:

A one-week (1) written notice or announcement must be given for all special business meetings.

4. Moderator:

(a) The pastor shall serve as the moderator over all regular and special business meetings of the church.

(b) In the absence of the moderator, the chairman of deacons shall preside over the regular and special business meetings of the church.

(c) The moderator should be familiar with Roberts' Rules of Order and shall conduct all meetings in accordance with parliamentary procedure.

5. Parliamentary Rule:

Roberts' Rules of Order is adopted as the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church, and for all other meetings that demand voting of the church members, including committee meetings.

6. Quorum:

A quorum consists of those who attend the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting, or one that has been properly called. A majority vote of the members present shall be binding.

## ARTICLE X REVISIONS AND AMENDMENTS

1. Reviewing:

A By-Laws Committee shall be appointed by the pastor and the Nominating Committee every five (5) years or as needed to review the By-Laws and make recommendations to the church.

2. Amending:

Any proposed amendment to this policy must be presented in writing at any regular or duly called business meeting of the church one (1) week prior to voting on said amendment. Acceptance of the amendment shall be by two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of church members present at said meeting.

3. Adoption:

These By-Laws, when adopted by the church, shall take precedence over any previous By-Laws.

## DECLARATION OF FAITH SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE

The Scriptures – Exodus 24:4, 2 Peter 1:19-21, Psalm 19:7-10, Deuteronomy 4:1-2, Matthew 5:17-18, Romans 15:4, 2 Timothy 3:15-17, Hebrews 4:12

God – Genesis 1:1, 2:7, Exodus 3:14-15, Isaiah 43:3, 43:15, 64:8, Matthew 6:9, 7:11, 23:9, Mark 1:9-11, 1 Corinthians 8:6, Deuteronomy 32:6, John 3:16, 4:24, 5:26, 14:6-13, Romans 8:14-15, Hebrews 11:6, 12:9, Ephesians 4:6

The Trinity – Genesis 1:2, Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:18-23, 3:17, 12:32, 28:19-20, John 1:1-18, 4:24, 10:30, Acts 5:3-4, Hebrews 1:1-3, 2 Corinthians 13:14, Colossians 2:9, Ephesians 1:13-14

Providence – Psalm 103, 135:6, Proverbs 15:3, 21:1-3, Joshua 24:15, Matthew 10:29-31, Mark 16:15-16, Hebrews 1:3, Romans 1:24-28, Philippians 4:6

Election – Isaiah 53:6, Mark 16:15-16, Ephesians 2:1-10, Matthew 21:28-32, Romans 10:12-13, Acts 20:32, Romans 10:12-15, 1 Timothy 2:3-6, 4:10, 2 Peter 3:9, 1 John 2:2

Fall of Man – Genesis 2:7, Micah 6:6-8, Acts 17:26-31, Psalm 51:5, Jeremiah 17:5, Matthew 16:26, Romans 1:19-32, 5:12-19, 1:19-20, Ephesians 2:1-3

Mediator – Matthew 14:33, 11:27-28, 16:16, Luke 1:29-38, Acts 1:9, Ephesians 1:20-22, 1 Timothy 3:16, 1 Peter 3:22, John 1:29, John 11:25-27, Galatians 4:4-5, Hebrews 9:12-15

Regeneration – Ezekiel 36:26-27; John 1:12-13; John 3:3-8; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 6:11; Ephesians 2:5,10; Titus 3:5-6

Repentance – Matthew 5:3-6; Acts 5:31; 2 Corinthians 7:10-11; 2 Timothy 2:25-26

Faith – Acts 13:48; 16:14; 1 Corinthians 4:7; Ephesians 2:8-9; Philippians 1:29

Justification – Romans 3:23-31, 5:9-10, 5:19, Galatians 2:16, Titus 3:7, 1 Corinthians 1:30, 2 Corinthians 5:21

Sanctification – 1 Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 1:3, 5:25-26; Titus 2:14; Hebrews 12:6-11; 1 John 1:7

Perseverance of the Saints – Matthew 18:12-14; John 3:16; John 6:35-40; 10:27-30; Romans 8:29-30,35-39; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 1 John 2:19, 5:4

The Church – Matthew 16:15-19, 18:15-17, Acts 2:41-46, 5:12-14, 15:9-11, 16:5, Ephesians 1:22-23, 2:19-22, 3:8-11, Romans 1:7, 1 Corinthians 1:2, 7:17, Colossians 1:18

Baptism – Matthew 3:13-17, 28:19-20, Mark 1:9-11, Acts 2:38-42, 8:35-39, 16:30-33, Romans 6:3-5, Colossians 2:12

The Lord's Supper – Matthew 26:26-30, Mark 14:22-26, Luke 22:19-20, 1 Corinthians 10:16, 10:21, 11:23-29

The Lord's Day – Exodus 20:8-11, Matthew 12:1-12, 28:1, Mark 2:27-28, 16:1-7, Acts 20:7, Romans 14:5-10, 1 Corinthians 16:1-2, Colossians 2:16, 3:16, Revelation 1:10

Liberty of Conscience – Genesis 1:27, 2:7, Matthew 6:6-7, 6:24, John 8:36, Acts 4:19-20, Romans 13:1-7, 1 Timothy 2:1-2, 1 Peter 2:12-17, Galatians 5:13, Philippians 3:20, James 4:12

The Resurrection – John 11:25, Matthew 25:31-36, Acts 1:6-7, Romans 8:19, 1 Corinthians 15:24-28, 15:42, Luke 9:2, 16:23, 1 Peter 2:4-10, 4:13, John 3:3, 5:28-29, Ecclesiastes 12:7

The Judgment – Ecclesiastes 12:14, Matthew 12:36-37, 18:8-9, 25:46, 16:27, Luke 12:40, Acts 17:31, 1 Thessalonians 5:1, Mark 8:38, Romans 14:10-13, 2 Timothy 4:1-5, 1 Corinthians 4:5, 6:3, 15:24-28, James 4:12, 2 Corinthians 5:10