

# **Constitution and By-Laws**

## **Article 1: Name**

The official name of this church is Bethesda Baptist Church and Schools, Inc. We will do business as Parkside Bible Church and also as Bethesda Christian Schools.

## **Article 2: Purpose**

Parkside Bible Church exists to make disciples of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19-20). We will seek to follow Him and fulfill this God-given mission by:

- Delighting in the Gospel
- Growing through Relationships
- Serving our Community
- Sending into the World

We will also seek to partner with other like-minded churches for the advance of the Gospel domestically and internationally.

## **Article 3: Statement of Faith**

### **Section 1: Basic Beliefs**

All members will be in complete agreement with these beliefs.

### **Statement on Final Authority:**

We believe that God has revealed Himself to the world through the person and work of His Son, Jesus Christ; this revelation is recorded authoritatively and inerrantly in the Bible. Though various theological statements provide necessary boundaries in ministry, we ultimately submit ourselves to God's Words as recorded in the Bible.

### **We Believe:**

1. There is one God, Creator of the universe and all that exists, who eternally exists in three distinct persons who are fully God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
2. All Scripture is inspired by God and is inerrant, authoritative, and sufficient for all things.
3. All humanity is made in the image of God and is also sinful from birth and by action. Therefore, all humanity is spiritually dead and justly remains under the wrath of God.
4. Jesus Christ, eternally God the Son, was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, and is both fully God and fully human.
5. Jesus Christ died in the place of sinful humanity on the cross to pay the penalty of sin and satisfy the wrath of God. He rose bodily from the grave, ascended into Heaven, and will one day return bodily to earth.

6. Only through repentance and trust in the person and redemptive work of Jesus Christ can one be reconciled to God and enter Heaven.
7. Salvation is all an act of God's grace according to His sovereign purposes and eternal plans and can never be revoked or lost. Salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone for the glory of God alone.
8. There will be a future bodily resurrection of the dead. Those who repent and trust in Jesus Christ will be raised to eternal life. Those who do not repent and trust in Jesus Christ will be raised to eternal punishment.

## **Section 2: Doctrinal Beliefs**

All pastors, deacons, and teachers at the church will be in complete agreement with these beliefs. It will be the responsibility of the pastoral team to define what constitutes a teacher.

1. **There is one God, the Creator of the universe and all that exists, who eternally exists in three distinct persons who are fully God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.**

We believe that the Triune God is the one true living God who is eternally self-existent and is unified as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We believe that God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit all exist as one being, yet, distinct persons (Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14). We believe that each person of the Godhead possesses one substance and are equally important (Mark 12:29). The Father is God, Jesus Christ is God, and the Holy Spirit is God (John 1:1; Acts 5:3-4). We believe that the Trinity is equal in every divine attribute and executes distinct, yet, harmonious offices in the great work of creation and redemption (Colossians 1:15; Ephesians 1:3-14).

### *God the Father*

We believe that God the Father orders all things according to His own purposes (Isaiah 14:27; 46:9-10; Malachi 3:6). We believe that God, in His eternal purpose, predestined all things before the foundations of time (Isaiah 14:26-27; Acts 2:23; Ephesians 1:11). We believe that His decree is eternal, immutable, and absolute, including the good and wicked acts of men, so-called accidental events, the means as well as the ends, the duration of a man's life, and the place that man lives (Malachi 3:6; Lamentations 3:37-38; John 9:1-6; Acts 17:26-27). We believe that God allows sin and doesn't always decree what He desires (James 1:13-15; 2 Peter 3:9; Deuteronomy 29:29). We believe that man is completely responsible and culpable for his actions. God's sovereignty and man's responsibility run as two parallel tracks that must stay in tension (Acts 2:23; John 6:35-44; Isaiah 55:8-9). We believe that God created all things out of nothing, apart from any

evolutionary processes (Genesis 1:1-31; Hebrews 11:3). We believe God created all things for His glory and is sovereign in creation and salvation (Psalm 19:1-6; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14). We believe that God the Father is the author of election, the commissioner of Jesus Christ, and the Father of His redeemed children (Ephesians 1:3-6; Hebrews 1:5; Romans 8:16-17).

### *God the Son*

We believe that God's only Son, Jesus Christ, is the Savior of the world who is at the right hand of God the Father (John 3:16-17; Acts 4:11-12, 7:55). We believe that Jesus Christ is the only way to Heaven (John 14:6). We believe that He is the creator and sustainer of the universe and the forgiver of sins (Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-4; Mark 2:5). We believe that he is the one mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5-6). We believe that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, died in the place of all sinners, rose bodily from the grave, ascended back to Heaven, and is coming soon (Luke 1:34-35; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Acts 1:9-11; Revelation 22:12).

### *God the Holy Spirit*

We believe that God the Holy Spirit was involved in creation, caused the virgin birth, and was the agent in giving the inspired Scriptures (Genesis 1:2; Luke 1:35; 2 Peter 1:21). We believe that the Holy Spirit is the agent of regeneration (Titus 3:5), baptizes believers into the body of Christ at the moment of salvation (1 Corinthians 12:13), permanently indwells them (Hebrews 8:9-11) and seals them as the guarantee of their inheritance (Ephesians 1:13-14). We believe the Holy Spirit equips each believer with spiritual gifts which are to be used to serve and build up the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Peter 4:10-11).

## **2. All Scripture is inspired by God and is inerrant, authoritative, and sufficient for all things.**

We believe the Bible is the written Word of God. We believe in the revelation and inspiration of all 66 books of Scripture in which God the Holy Spirit imparted the very words of God to the Bible writers and carried them along to write God's words without error in the original manuscripts (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21). We believe that the Bible is inerrant, infallible, and its authority and sufficiency endures forever (Matthew 5:17-18; 1 Peter 1:23-25). We believe the entire Bible should be interpreted and understood in its literal, grammatical, historical, and redemptive context. We believe that illumination is the act of God the Holy Spirit in which He enables believers to understand all Scripture (1 Corinthians 2:10-14; John 14:26).

- 3. All humanity is made in the image of God and is also sinful from birth and by action. Therefore, all humanity is spiritually dead and justly remains under the wrath of God.**

We believe all humanity is created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27; Psalm 8). Everyone is fearfully and wonderfully made by God (Psalm 139:13-16). We believe Adam's special creation as the first human, apart from any evolutionary processes, and existence as a real historical person is essential to the Redemptive story. We believe he chose to sin and through him death spread to all men (Romans 5:12). We believe all humanity is sinful from conception, and therefore, spiritually dead and totally depraved (Psalm 51:5; Ephesians 2:1-3). We believe all humanity is incapable of reaching out to God for salvation unless God first intervenes in grace (John 6:44). We believe all humanity willfully chooses to sin which flows from the heart (Mark 7:21-23; Ecclesiastes 7:20, 9:3). We believe all humanity is enslaved to sin (2 Peter 2:19; John 8:34) and no one can seek God apart from sovereign grace (Romans 3:10-11; John 6:41-44). We believe all humanity lives in unbelief and justly remains under the wrath of God because of inherited sin, imputed sin, and personal sin (John 3:16-21, 36).

- 4. Jesus Christ, eternally God the Son, was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, and is both fully God and fully human.**

We believe that Jesus Christ has eternally existed as God's Son (Micah 5:2; John 1:1). We believe in the incarnation of Jesus Christ, whereby, He took on a sinless human nature without ceasing to be God, therefore, remaining unblemished deity while also possessing true, sinless humanity in one person forever (Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 1:23). We believe He was born of a virgin by a supernatural act of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35). We believe Jesus Christ was tempted in every respect as we are, yet without sin (Hebrews 4:15; 1 John 3:5). While on earth He developed as all men do (Luke 2:52); He grew tired, wept, felt compassion, experienced grief, hunger, thirst, and suffered pain (John 4:6, 11:35; Matthew 9:36, 4:2; John 19:1-30). We believe Jesus Christ is the God-man.

- 5. Jesus Christ died in the place of sinful humanity on the cross to pay the penalty of sin and satisfy the wrath of God. He rose bodily from the grave, ascended into Heaven, and will one day return bodily to earth.**

We believe Jesus Christ died for the sins of the whole world and satisfied God's wrath (John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 5:15; 1 John 2:2). We also believe that Jesus specifically paid the penalty for the sins of believers as He stood in their place on the cross (1 Timothy 4:10; Galatians 3:13; John 10:11; 2 Corinthians 5:21). We believe Jesus was resurrected bodily and proved this by displaying human characteristics while with His disciples (Luke 24:36-49; John 20:26-29, 21:4-14).

We believe Jesus ascended into Heaven and will return in the same way (Acts 1:6-11).

**6. Only through repentance and trust in the person and redemptive work of Jesus Christ can one be reconciled to God and enter Heaven.**

We believe repenting from sin and turning to Jesus is the required response to the message of the Gospel (Mark 1:14-15, Acts 26:19-20; Romans 10:9). We believe that true biblical repentance directly and necessarily results from trusting in the person and work of Jesus Christ as the only way to salvation, reconciliation with God, and entrance to Heaven (1 John 3:9-10; Acts 4:12; Ephesians 2:14-16; John 14:6). We believe that God's holiness demands a perfect atoning sacrifice for sin (Leviticus 11:44-45; 1 Peter 1:14-16). As the only perfect man, Jesus Christ, the God-man, is the only person capable of providing salvation (1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 4:15).

**7. Salvation is all an act of God's grace according to His sovereign purposes and eternal plans and can never be revoked or lost. Salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone for the glory of God alone.**

We believe salvation is received solely by God's grace, through faith in Jesus Christ, apart from any works done by man (Romans 3:28; Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:1-9). We believe faith itself is a gift from God, not something produced by man (Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 8:7-8; 1 Corinthians 2:7-15; John 3:19-20). We believe the ultimate goal of salvation is to bring glory to God by accomplishing His sovereign purposes and eternal plans (Ephesians 1:5-14). We believe that God, in eternity past, lovingly chose some to salvation (Ephesians 1:3-14; 1 Peter 1:2-5; John 6:41-51). We believe this reality in no way diminishes man's culpability for sin, responsibility to repent, or the call to preach the Gospel to all nations (Luke 13:1-5; Acts 17:30; Matthew 28:19-20). We believe that whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved (John 6:35-37; Romans 10:13; 1 Timothy 2:4). We believe that genuine faith will produce a changed life and will lead to holy living (Romans 6:1-14; 1 Peter 1:14-16; James 2:17). We believe that when a person truly comes to Christ, their salvation can never be revoked by God nor can it be lost or given back by man because it is a free gift of God's grace and a commitment He chooses to keep (John 10:27-29; Romans 8:31-39).

**8. Jesus will return bodily to Earth at any moment. There will be a future bodily resurrection of the dead. Those who repent and trust in Jesus Christ will be raised to eternal life. Those who do not repent and trust in Jesus Christ will be raised to eternal punishment.**

We believe Jesus will return at any moment for His redeemed and will subsequently establish His millennial kingdom. (Matthew 24:29-31, 36-44; 1 Thessalonians 5:2; Revelation 20:1-6). We believe there is a literal future for Israel (Jeremiah 31:33-34; Romans 11:26-29; Acts 1:6). We believe all humans who have died will one day be raised bodily for the final judgment (Revelation 20:11-15, Romans 2:5-11, Matthew 25:31-46). We believe those who have repented of sin and placed their trust solely in the person and work of Jesus Christ will be raised to eternal life with God to live on a New Earth (John 5:24, Romans 8:1, Revelation 21:1-4). We believe those who have not repented of their sin and have not placed their trust solely in the person and work of Jesus Christ will be raised to eternal condemnation in Hell, a physical place of separation from the presence of God, eternal fire, torment, anguish, and pain (Mark 9:43-48, Luke 16:19-31, Revelation 14:11).

### **Section 3: Parkside Bible Church Distinctives**

All members will be in complete agreement with these beliefs.

#### **Baptism and Communion**

Baptism and communion are the two ordinances given to the local church. Believer's baptism is through immersion and is a public identification of union with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Baptism signifies the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus as well as the believer's death to sin and resurrection to new life. Baptism is not a requirement for salvation nor does it possess any power to save, but is commanded of believers as an act of obedience and outward demonstration of a decision to follow Jesus (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:38-41; Acts 8:35-38; Romans 6:3-6).

Communion is a public remembrance and celebration of the death of Jesus Christ. As Christians remember the body and blood of Jesus, symbolized by the bread and juice, they are commanded to solemnly examine themselves and confess sin so as to avoid taking communion in an unworthy manner. The remembrance of Jesus' work on the cross must lead us to celebration as we rejoice in the salvation He purchased. Like baptism, communion is reserved for believers and possesses no power to save (1 Corinthians 11:20-29; Luke 22:19-20; Acts 2:42-46).

#### **Call to Mission and Church Planting**

Just as Jesus was sent into the world to save sinners, so all believers are sent by God to make disciples of all nations. On an individual level, this means every believer is called to take the gospel of Jesus Christ to their friends, co-workers, neighbors, and community. Corporately, we seek to mobilize people in various small group ministries to assist one another in building relationships, serving

others, and evangelizing our community and world. We also seek to use our church campus to meet our community where they are and show the love of Jesus in conjunction with sharing the good news of Jesus.

It is our belief that planting new churches is both God's established plan to reach the nations and the most effective method to see long-term results. We therefore seek to train, equip, and send our people out to plant churches both domestically and internationally. We also partner with church planters around the globe in order to strategically invest our time, talent, and treasure in the advance of the gospel (John 20:21; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 13-15; Acts 14:21-23).

### **Church Membership**

We believe all Christians should be members of a local church. Membership places us under the God-ordained authority of the church, gives a shared identity and unites us with a common purpose. Church membership helps us pursue these commands in community and also follows God's design for accountability and church discipline when we depart from the calling He has placed on our lives. While this distinctive is not explicitly stated in Scripture, a careful reading of the New Testament only makes sense against the backdrop of church membership. Church membership serves as a catalyst for living in community, which is a key ingredient for displaying the image of God, loving one another, and living on mission (1 Corinthians 5:1-11; Acts 2:42-47; Hebrews 10:24-25; Galatians 6:10; 1 Timothy 5:1-10; John 13:35).

### **Marriage and Sexuality**

We believe God wonderfully and immutably creates all human beings in his image as either male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders beautifully picture both the image and nature of God. Human marriage is also a picture of Jesus' marriage to the church where He is the groom and the church is the bride. This imagery also demands that male and female be understood as distinct and complementary. (Genesis 1:26-27; Ephesians 5:22-33; Galatians 3:27-29).

God has gloriously ordained marriage to be an exclusive union of one man and one woman for life. God designed and planned sexual intimacy to be only within the context of marriage. All sexual activity outside of marriage is expressly forbidden (Genesis 2:18-25; Romans 1:26-28; 1 Corinthians 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4).

God's mercy, grace, and forgiveness are freely given to all who repent of their sin and come to faith in Jesus Christ. Further, we believe all human beings should be treated with love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful attitudes and behaviors are to be repudiated and are not in accord with the practices of this church and,

more importantly, with the teaching of Scripture (Romans 10:9-10; Acts 3:19-21; Mark 12:28-31; John 4:1-42).

### **Women in Ministry**

We believe men and women possess complete equality in essence, value and dignity. God's divine design is that they have complementary, distinct roles within the church. We encourage women to use their spiritual gifts to build up the body of Christ wherever possible unless Scripture clearly excludes women from a given ministry role. The office and role of pastor is reserved for spiritually qualified men. The issue is not only whether women hold the title of pastor, but also whether they perform the roles designated by God for pastors. Just as the different roles and mutual submission within the Trinity do not indicate inequality, so different roles and mutual submission within the church do not indicate inequality (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Timothy 2:12; 1 Peter 1:2; John 6:38; Galatians 3:27-29).

### **Sanctity of Life**

We believe that all humans are made in the image of God. As the only beings made in the image of God, all humans possess immense value. Because God deeply loves humanity and identifies himself as a defender of the weak, we should do the same. As God's ambassadors on Earth, we are called to defend, protect, and value all human life. This includes pre-born babies, the elderly, the physically challenged, the mentally challenged, the poor, refugees, orphans, and widows (Genesis 1:27-28; Psalm 139:13-16; Proverbs 14:31; Psalm 68:5; Psalm 82:3-4; James 1:27).

## **Article 4: Employment**

All employees of the church and school are required to be in agreement with Parkside Bible Church's Basic Beliefs and Standards of Conduct as outlined in the Employee Handbook. All employment decisions will be made by the pastoral team or someone appointed by them.

## **Article 5: Membership**

### **Section 1: Requirements for Membership**

All new members will meet the following criteria to join Parkside Bible Church:

1. Provide testimony of salvation
2. Be baptized as a believer
3. Be in complete agreement with the Basic Beliefs and Parkside Bible Church Distinctives
4. Be at least 18 years old
5. Complete membership classes
6. Interview with at least one pastor
7. Receive affirmation from the pastors to become a member

8. Go before the congregation to receive public affirmation from the congregation and publicly commit to the expectations of members as detailed in Section 2

## **Section 2: Expectations of Members**

In light of our stated purpose as a church, all members will make the following commitments to the entire church body:

1. We commit to following Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, walking by the Spirit, and bringing glory to the Father in every aspect of our lives (Mark 8:34-36; Galatians 5:16-26; Matthew 5:14-16; I Corinthians 10:31).
2. We commit to have others minister to us and be involved in our spiritual growth and to do the same for those in our individual and church family (Proverbs 27:17; Galatians 6:1-10; Hebrews 10:24-25; Deuteronomy 6:1-9).
3. We commit to finding a way to exercise our spiritual gifts and use them in such a way as to build up the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Peter 4:7-11).
4. We commit to living a life of mission and mercy where we seek to engage the lost and hurting and pray for opportunities to talk about our faith and love for Jesus as well as minister to them in the name of Jesus (Matthew 9:35-38, 28:19-20; Luke 10:25-37; John 4:1-42).
5. We commit to giving of our time, talent, and treasure to further the mission and work of Jesus at Parkside Bible Church (Luke 9:23-25; Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8:1-15, 9:6-15).
6. We commit to submit to and follow the leadership of Parkside Bible Church as those leaders seek to follow Jesus (Hebrews 13:17; 1 Timothy 5:17-19; 1 Peter 2:13-25, 5:1-4).

## **Section 3: Duties of Members**

In addition to the six commitments previously detailed, all members are expected to provide affirmation, and when appropriate, constructive feedback to the pastors or someone appointed by them in the following areas:

1. New pastors
2. New deacons
3. Affirmation of lead pastor
4. Annual budget
5. Constitutional change(s)
6. Incurment of debt
7. New members
8. Members under church discipline
9. Dissolution

Affirmation for new pastors, lead pastor, the annual budget, constitutional changes, the incurment of debt, and the dissolution of Parkside Bible Church will be provided through a vote by means of paper ballot with each member's name printed on the ballot. Members must be physically present at the time of voting to cast their ballot. Anonymous ballots will not be counted. All votes will be taken on a Sunday meeting of the church.

The dissolution of Parkside Bible Church must be presented to the members at least four weeks prior to the vote.

A 2/3 majority vote is needed for all votes to pass.

#### **Section 4: Removal from Membership**

In light of each member's stated submission to the leadership of the pastors, removal from membership may occur through one of two means.

The pastors or a member may sense that the member's God-ordained time at Parkside Bible Church has come to a close. This may be for change of residence, God's leading to another church, doctrinal disagreement, or ceasing to participate in the life of the church (this list is illustrative, not exhaustive). When this happens, the pastors and member should invite one another to dialogue about their ongoing membership at Parkside Bible Church. If at the conclusion of that dialogue the pastors remain convinced that the member's time at Parkside Bible Church has come to a close, they may remove the member, but only on the basis of unanimous agreement of the pastors. If this decision is reached, it must also be accompanied by written communication to the member. The church members will also be informed of any departing members.

Members may also be removed through the process of church discipline, as detailed in the Church Discipline Policy.

#### **Article 6: Officers**

The Bible mandates only two offices for the local church – pastors and deacons (Scripture uses the terms “pastor”, “elder”, and “overseer” interchangeably). Pastors are to lead in shepherding while deacons are to lead in serving. The pastoral team will consist of no less than three pastors, any of which may be paid or unpaid. The deacon team will consist of no less than three deacons.

##### **Section 1: Pastoral Qualifications**

Pastors must possess both desire and calling from God for this vital role of ministry (1 Timothy 3:1; Acts 20:28; Hebrews 13:17). This calling must also be affirmed through the other pastors, deacons, and congregation. Pastors must meet the character and competency requirements as detailed in Scripture (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9).

##### **Section 2: Pastoral Installation**

The pastoral team may present a prospective pastor to the church at any time. This must be a unanimous presentation. This is defined as “100% affirmative vote from all pastors” (as opposed to “unanimity” as defined in Article 6, Section 3). In addition to meeting the

pastoral qualifications, prospective pastors from within Parkside Bible Church must successfully complete at least one theological training course prior to installation, as prescribed by the pastoral team. If a prospective pastor is being installed from outside of Parkside Bible Church, the search, interviews, and due diligence conducted by the pastoral team (or those appointed by them) will determine if additional theological training is needed. All prospective pastors must be in complete agreement with Parkside Bible Church's Basic Beliefs, Doctrinal Beliefs, and Parkside Bible Church Distinctives. Following presentation to the members, the members will have at least four weeks to pray over and consider whether the pastor being presented meets the Biblical requirements. If a member believes the prospective pastor to be unqualified, that member is expected to bring such concern to the pastors, who may on the basis of that concern remove the prospective pastor from consideration. If a member believes the prospective pastor to be qualified, they should also bring such affirmation to the pastors. At the conclusion of the inquiry, if the pastoral team remains convinced that God has called the prospective pastor to ministry at Parkside Bible Church, he will be put before the church for affirmation and installation during a Sunday service. Final affirmation of new pastors will be through a congregational vote, as detailed in Article 5, Section 3.

### **Section 3: Pastoral Duties**

Pastors are to lead the church in preaching, teaching, publicly reading Scripture, prayer, doctrinal matters, vision, and stewardship (2 Timothy 4:2; Titus 2:1; 1 Timothy 4:13; 1 Timothy 2:1-3; 1 Timothy 1:3; Titus 1:9; Titus 1:5; Acts 4:32-37). While additional responsibilities may be given to pastors at various times, their primary ministry must be in prayer and the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:4). Scripture clearly lays out the expectation that pastors will devote themselves to training and equipping the church to carry out the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:11-12). The pastors are responsible for leading all committees or designating someone to lead them on their behalf.

As a 501(c)(3) organization, Parkside Bible Church is legally required to have a governing board (also known as trustees). Three lay pastors will fulfill this role and will be selected to serve as trustees on an annual basis. In the event that Parkside Bible Church does not have three lay pastors, deacons will be selected by the pastors to fulfill this role.

While there may be a difference between pastors in areas of giftedness, training, experience, or Bible knowledge, all pastors are co-equals. Various pastoral positions may be created, removed, or modified on the basis of the needs of the church and abilities of the pastoral team. The pastoral team will nominate a lead pastor who will be responsible to oversee the regular preaching on Sundays and leadership of the pastors, deacons, and Bethesda Christian Schools. The lead pastor may choose to fulfill those duties himself or delegate them to other pastors. Final affirmation of the lead pastor will be through a congregational vote, as detailed in Article 5, Section 3.

The pastoral team will practice unanimity in decision making. If unanimity is not achieved, decisions will be dropped, postponed, reevaluated, or modified. Unanimity will be defined as, “total agreement by the pastors to support a decision.” This means that at times there may not be total agreement on a decision but a willingness on the part of all the pastors who disagree to submit to and support the decision of the pastoral team. When all pastors are willing to support a decision, unanimity will be achieved.

Lay pastors will work in conjunction with the finance committee to oversee the determination of all employee salaries and benefits. Lay pastors will also appoint a church clerk/treasurer who will be responsible to record the proceedings of the church and keep record of the members of the church. Additionally, this person will work in conjunction with the finance committee to verify offering deposits in the bank, to see that the giving records of individuals are recorded, and to see that a confidential copy is sent to the individual for their use. This position will be appointed on an annual basis.

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and inerrant Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Parkside Bible Church’s faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, the pastoral team is Parkside Bible Church’s final interpretive authority on the Bible’s meaning and application.

All pastors will undergo a formal review and assessment from the other pastors on an annual basis.

#### **Section 4: Pastoral Term**

Once installed, pastors will serve until retirement, removal, or resignation. The reasons for removal could be failure to meet the qualifications as laid out in Scripture, change in doctrinal position that results in disagreement with the Doctrinal Beliefs, ministry fatigue, or relocation (this list is not exhaustive, but illustrative). Members who have concern about a pastor that may or may not warrant removal should humbly approach that pastor with their concerns. If the pastor does not listen to them, the members should then proceed to the rest of the pastoral team with their concerns that have been observed by numerous members (1 Timothy 5:19; Matthew 18:15-20). A pastor may be removed temporarily or permanently by the unanimous decision of the rest of the pastoral team.

#### **Section 5: Deacon Qualifications**

Scripture clearly defines the qualifications for the office of deacon (1 Timothy 3:8-13). Since a deacon’s role is to lead the church in serving, faithful demonstration of active service in the church is a prerequisite for filling that office. Deacons should be a model of Christ who came not to be served but to serve (Mark 10:45).

#### **Section 6: Deacon Installation**

Deacon nominee(s) will be presented to the church each calendar year, pending the needs of the church. If a pressing need arises, the pastoral team may present a deacon nominee to the church at any time during the year. The members will then have at least four weeks to pray over and consider whether the deacon(s) being presented meet the Biblical requirements. If a member believes any of the prospective deacon(s) to be unqualified, that member is expected to bring such concern to the pastors, who may on the basis of that concern remove the prospective deacon from consideration. If a member believes the prospective deacon to be qualified, they should also bring such affirmation to the pastors. If the pastoral team remains convinced that God has called the new deacon(s) to ministry at Parkside Bible Church, they will be put before the church for affirmation and installation during a Sunday service.

### **Section 7: Deacon Duties**

The primary role of deacons is to lead the church in serving. Each deacon will be assigned a specific area of service from which they are to lead. They will rally the church to serve for the mission of Jesus Christ within the philosophy and vision of our local church (Acts 6:1-6).

### **Section 8: Deacon Term**

Once installed, deacons will serve a three-year term. Deacons may serve consecutive terms. Deacons may be removed temporarily or permanently by consensus of the pastoral team. The reasons for removal could be failure to meet the qualifications as laid out in Scripture, change in doctrinal position that results in disagreement with the Doctrinal Beliefs, change of ministry needs within the church, ministry fatigue, or relocation (this list is not exhaustive, but illustrative).

## **Article 7: Committees**

As stated in the pastoral duties section, it is the responsibility of the pastors to lead all committees or to designate someone to lead on their behalf. Committee members will be appointed by the pastoral team on an annual basis and announced to the church at the annual meeting, as delineated in Article 7, Section 2.

### **Section 1: Missions Committee**

The missions committee will meet on a regular basis and consist of three or more members as well as one of the pastors (or someone appointed by them) and one of the deacons. Each member will be in complete agreement with the Basic Beliefs, Doctrinal Beliefs, and Parkside Bible Church Distinctives. They are expected to view themselves as a caring and working committee as opposed to an oversight committee. Their primary roles include:

- Building and caring for partnerships with our supported missionaries
- Enhancing congregational awareness of global missions and the needs of our supported missionaries

- Mobilizing the congregation to spread the gospel locally, domestically, and internationally
- Overseeing the stewardship of resources allocated toward missions in conjunction with the pastoral team

## **Section 2: Finance Committee**

The finance committee will meet on a regular basis and consist of three or more members in addition to one of the pastors (or someone appointed by them) and one of the deacons. They are expected to assist the pastors in planning and overseeing the resources entrusted to Parkside Bible Church. Their primary roles include:

- Developing the annual budget
- Managing church investments
- Negotiating insurance policies and rates
- Overseeing benevolence funds and distribution
- Giving input on the sale and/or purchase of property
- Any other duties relating to church finances that may arise

The annual budget will be presented to the members at least four weeks prior to the start of the fiscal year. This must be affirmed by the members through a congregational vote, as detailed in Article 5, Section 3. The meeting in which the budget is presented will serve as the church's annual meeting. Updates will be provided on a quarterly basis at a meeting of the church.

The potential incurment of debt must also be presented to the members at least four weeks prior to the member affirmation. This affirmation will take place through a congregational vote, as detailed in Article 5, Section 3.

## **Section 3: Bethesda Christian Schools Steering Committee**

The BCS steering committee will consist of three or more people in addition to one of the pastors (or someone appointed by them) and one of the deacons. Additionally, a majority of the steering committee must be members of Parkside Bible Church. The steering committee is expected to work in conjunction with the Head of Schools at BCS. The primary roles of the committee include:

- To help determine the mission and core values of the school and ensure that initiatives of the school are in alignment with its mission and core values
- To create, recommend, and monitor the school's budget
- To promote the school publicly to ensure the school is sustained through fundraising and admissions
- To serve the school to advance the Gospel of Jesus Christ and train students to serve him through the school's programs and services

If there is a vacancy in the position of Head of Schools, the steering committee will work in conjunction with the pastoral team to hire a new Head of Schools. The Head of Schools is responsible to the lead pastor for his/her direction.

#### **Section 4: Additional Committees**

As other needs present themselves, the pastoral team may assemble and/or disassemble additional committees as they deem appropriate.

#### **Article 8: Amendments**

It is the responsibility of the pastoral team to amend this constitution as needed. Any amendments will be unanimously presented by the pastors to the members for prayer and consideration for at least four weeks. At the conclusion of the designated time of prayer and consideration, the pastors will prayerfully weigh the feedback from the members and present the amendment(s) to the members for final affirmation, as detailed in Article 5, Section 3.

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