

# **CONSTITUTION**

## **Wickland Baptist Church, Inc. Bardstown, Kentucky**

### **PREAMBLE**

We, the members of Wickland Baptist Church, Inc., for the purpose of preserving and making secure the principles of our faith and to the end that this body be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the Southern Baptist Convention, and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of the church, and to set forth the relationship of this body to other bodies of the same faith, we do declare and establish this constitution.

### **I. NAME**

This body shall be known as the Wickland Baptist Church, Inc., of Bardstown, Nelson County, Kentucky.

### **II. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this body shall be to provide regular opportunities for public worship, to sustain the ordinances, doctrines, ethics, and disciplines set forth in the New Testament for the local church; to nurture its members through a program of Christian Education; to channel its offerings to the support of the objects of the Redeemer's Kingdom; and to preach and propagate among all people the gospel of the Revelation of God through Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

### **III. ARTICLES OF FAITH**

The Articles of Faith adopted by this Church are contained in the Tract, The Baptist Faith and Message, adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000. These Articles are a revision of the The Baptist Faith and Message of 1963, which is a revision of the Memphis Confession of 1925, which are based upon the New Hampshire and Philadelphia Confessions, which in turn are based upon the Old London Confession of 1689.

## IV. CHURCH COVENANT

Having been brought by God's grace to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and to give ourselves to Him, and having been baptized as our public profession of faith, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, we covenant with each other as one body, that we will do the following:

- We will work and pray for the unity of the Spirit.
- We will walk together in brotherly love, caring for and watching over one another.
- We will assemble together regularly.
- We will pray for each other.
- We will rejoice with each other.
- We will seek to bear each other's burdens and sorrows.
- We will serve the Lord together, and we will serve each other.
- We will, as individuals and a corporate body, seek to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord.
- We will seek to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to pursue holiness in the strength of the Lord.
- We will submit to and participate in the accountability and discipline of this church.
- We will disciple our children and anyone under our care in the ways of the Lord.
- We will seek to be a witness of the Gospel to those around us in word and deed; especially to our family and friends.
- We will give 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 will sustain the church's worship, ordinances, and doctrine (as found in the church's statement of faith).
- We will hold the Bible as our ultimate and final authority in all matters.
- We will, as individuals, covenant with another church of like faith and practice, if the Lord should move us from this place.
- We will depend on God to help us fulfill this covenant with one another, by His grace and for His glory.

## **V. CHARACTER**

*Section 1. Polity* – The government of this Church is vested solely in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation, which are common among Southern Baptist Churches.

*Section 2. Affiliation* – So far as it is consistent with the Word of God, this Church shall cooperate with and have representation in the denominational causes sponsored by the Southern Baptist Convention. Believing that the Nelson Baptist Association, the Kentucky Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention, and other affiliated and auxiliary organizations and causes of the Southern Baptist Convention have as their purpose the promotion and support of missions, education, and benevolence of character, and in keeping with the spirit of this Constitution and the Articles of Faith of this Church, we, therefore, agree to participate in these organizations through our duly elected messengers and our support of the causes which these organizations represent and foster.

*Section 3. Doctrine* – This Church accepts the Scriptures as its authority in all matters of faith and practice. Its understanding of Christian truth is in accord with the Articles of Faith.

## **VI. GENERAL**

*Section 1. License* – When a member of this Church announces that he feels the call to the ministry, and having been properly counseled by a special committee composed of the pastor and deacons, the Church may license him as an acknowledgment of his call to the ministry and encouragement to make preparation for it. The clerk of the Church may furnish him with a Certificate of License as his credential. It is understood that the performance of civil duties by the one licensed shall be governed by the state law. The certificate is to be presented on approval of three-fourths (3/4) of the members present at the Business Meeting.

*Section 2. Ordination* – In the event this Church has been requested to ordain a member who has been called as pastor of a Southern Baptist Church, the following procedure shall be followed: The Church will express its approval of the candidate by voting to consider his ordination. It may invite messengers from neighboring Southern Baptist Churches to form a Council to examine the candidate and report to this Church. Upon receipt of

a favorable report from the Council and approval of three-fourths (3/4) of the members present, the Church shall proceed with the ordination. If such ordained person leaves the ministry he shall return the Certificate to the Church Clerk.

*Section 3. Property Holding* – The securing and maintaining of real property, buildings, and equipment by this Church shall be for the express purpose of providing facilities for public worship and for the engagement upon the missionary, educational, and benevolent interests of this Church, of the character and in the spirit of the Constitution and Articles of Faith of this congregation. If at any time this Church shall determine to alter the quality of its beliefs and practices so as in important respects to be at variance with the character described in this Constitution and the Articles of Faith of this congregation, and if the decision is by less than unanimous vote of those present at a regular business meeting of the Church, it is understood that the rights of the property of the Church shall inhere in the part of the congregation which shall agree to continue to use the property for the purpose for which it was purchased and has been to that time maintained.

## **VII. ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS**

*Section 1. Adoption* – This Constitution shall be considered adopted and in immediate effect if and when this Church votes in favor of same. Its adoption shall require the approval of three-fourths (3/4) of the members present.

*Section 2. Amendments* – This Constitution may be amended, altered, or repealed by three-fourths (3/4) of the members present at any regular business meeting of the Church or at any specially called meeting for that purpose, provided that such amendment, alteration, or repeal, as it is proposed, shall be given to the Clerk in writing, shall be presented to the Church at least thirty (30) days before the time the vote is taken, and shall be read from the pulpit to the congregation on the Lord's Day following its being presented to the Church.

## **BY-LAWS**

### **I. MEMBERSHIP**

*Section 1.* The membership of this Church shall consist of those persons who make a public profession of their faith in Christ as Savior and Lord, and who after due examination by the Pastor, or the one extending the invitation, as to their Christian experience, their proposed faithfulness to the Church, its programs, organizations, and the activities of our denomination, desire to be baptized into the fellowship of Wickland Baptist Church, Inc., shall be baptized. Those coming for baptism shall be given materials prepared for new members, the contents of which shall be fully explained to the new convert by the Pastor, Moderator, Clerk, or Chairman of Deacons. After meeting the above requirements, membership shall be conferred by majority vote of the members present at a regular business meeting, upon the recommendation of the Pastor or Counselor.

*Section 2.* Those coming from other Southern Baptist Churches and having been counseled as described in *Section 1*, shall be received, pending a letter, as members by majority vote of the members present at a regular business meeting, upon the recommendation of the Pastor or Counselor. The materials for new members shall be given and explained to those persons coming by letter.

*Section 3.* Such counseling, or explanation of booklet, shall in due season be reported to the Church in regular business meeting.

*Section 4.* Those persons desiring membership who have no regular letter of recommendation and who publicly profess Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and who have experienced “Believers Baptism” by immersion, and have met the requirements outlined in *Section 1*, may be received by a statement of their Christian experience satisfactory to this Church as expressed by the unanimous vote of the members present at a regular business meeting, upon the recommendation of the Pastor.

*Section 5.* Letters of dismissal or recommendation may be granted to any Southern Baptist Church upon majority vote of the members present at a regular business meeting. When letters are granted, membership in this Church will terminate.

*Section 6.* When it is verified that a member of this Church has joined a Non-Southern Baptist Church, membership in this Church will terminate upon majority vote of the members present at a regular business meeting.

*Section 7.* Members are expected to be faithful in all duties essential to the Christian Life and in fulfilling the Covenant he or she has made with this church (see church covenant), to attend regularly the services of the Church, to contribute regularly and systematically to its support and kingdom causes, and to share in its organized work.

*Section 8.* The above statements on “*Membership*” shall be fully explained to a prospective Pastor by the Counseling Committee on Prospective Pastors. (See Section on “Pastor”)

## **II. CHURCH STAFF, OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES**

### ***Section 1. Personnel Structure***

The Personnel Structure of the church shall exist of four separate staff entities:

- A. The Ministerial Staff shall include the senior Pastor and all Associate Pastors.
- B. Ministerial Support Staff shall include the deacon Chairman, Missions Director and the Sunday School Director.
- C. Administrative Staff shall include the Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Trustee Chairman, Church Secretary, and the Personnel Committee Chairman.
- D. Employees will be any persons hired by the church for specific duties.

### ***Section 2. Officers and staff***

The officers of this Church shall be the Senior Pastor, Associate Pastors and other Ministerial and Administrative leaders as needed. These include, but are not limited to deacons, trustees, clerk, treasurer, financial secretary, and such other officers that shall be required for the work of the Church in its departments and organizations. All of these shall be elected by the Church. Assistants to Church Officers, or organizational heads shall be elected when the Church deems it necessary.

### **Section 3. Election and Duties**

#### **A. Senior Pastor and Associate Pastors**

All shall be members in good standing or become members upon election.

When a vacancy occurs, or the need is determined by the church, the following procedure shall be the policy of the Church in securing a new Senior Pastor or Associate Pastor:

1. A Pastoral Search Committee shall be elected by the Church. The committee shall be elected by ballot. The five (5) receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared the "Pastoral Search Committee." If the five (5) does not include a deacon, the one receiving the least number of votes shall withdraw and the deacons shall elect one of their number to replace him.
2. The Pastoral Search Committee shall bring to the consideration of the Church only one prospect at a time.
3. Before the appearing of a prospective pastor before the Church, the "Counseling Committee," composed of the Pastoral Search Committee and the active deacons, shall meet with the minister under consideration in prayer for spiritual guidance, clarification of beliefs, practices, doctrines, missions, denominational emphasis, and financial matters.
4. The Pastoral Search Committee and the active Deacons shall make the final decision as to the recommendation of such prospect. This shall be a unanimous recommendation.
5. The vote shall take place at a meeting called for such purpose. At least one-week notice of such action shall be announced on the Lord's Day. Election shall be by ballot. Affirmative votes by three-fourths (3/4) of the members present shall be required to constitute a call.
6. The Pastoral Search Committee is encouraged to seek candidates who have received training in Southern Baptist Schools.

7. This call may be terminated by resignation of the Pastor with no vote necessary. His continued services shall not exceed thirty (30) days without approval of the Church. The Church may terminate the Pastor's call by three-fourths (3/4) vote of the members present. His continued services shall not exceed thirty (30) days without Church approval.
8. Duties – The Senior Pastor shall be charged with the general welfare and oversight of the Church. He shall be ex-officio member of all organizations, departments, and committees. He may call a special meeting of any group or organization according to procedures set forth in the By-Laws. He shall conduct religious services on stated and special occasions, administer the ordinances of this Church, minister to members of the Church and community, and perform other duties that usually pertain to his office. He shall have charge of the pulpit ministry of the Church and shall arrange for workers to assist in revival meetings and other special services and shall provide for guest speakers when he is absent from the pulpit. The Pastor shall preside at all meetings of the Church except as otherwise provided in these By-Laws. He shall be the administrative head of the Church  
The Pastor shall be paid a salary mutually agreeable to him and the Church. The Budget Committee will study the salary annually and recommend any changes which should be made. He shall be permitted to hold revival meetings and conferences as mutually agreeable to him and the Church.
9. All Associate Pastors shall execute the duties of the specific ministry that they were called for and be ex-officio members of all committees that their calling relates to. They shall answer to the Senior Pastor and the church. Along with the Senior Pastor they will be charged with the general welfare and oversight of the church.

## **B. Deacons**

*Section 1. Qualifications* – These shall be in keeping with 1 Timothy 3:8-13. Church Members are asked to prayerfully consider the following criteria when nominating and electing Deacons:

1. The Deacon shall exhibit emotional as well as spiritual maturity, and continued growth in Christlikeness in both knowledge and practice, reflecting the qualities in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

2. The Deacon shall be male.
3. The Deacon shall have been a member of Wickland Baptist Church for one year as a period of testing to prove himself blameless and dignified, knowledgeable of the truths of the Gospel and living a life consistent with it, being a person of honesty and straight speech. (1 Timothy 3:8-10)
4. The Deacons shall be faithful in attendance to all church meetings, active in support of the total church ministry, and demonstrate a personal commitment to sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ. (1 Timothy 3:9)
5. The Deacon shall not be addicted to alcohol or use harmful drugs. (1 Timothy 3:8)
6. The Deacon shall not be greedy for dishonest gain, but be generous in giving to God's church, support of missions, and meeting the needs of the poor and needy. (1 Timothy 3:8)
7. The Deacon shall be the husband of one wife, if married, and shall manage his children and household well. (1 Timothy 3:12) Also, the Deacon's wife must be taken into consideration and must meet the biblical requirements as presented in 1 Timothy 3:11. she must be dignified, not a slanderer, sober-minded, faithful in all things.

Section 2: Selection – All members of the church are encouraged to submit to the Deacons in writing, the names of church members that they would like to see serve as Deacons. The Deacons will then interview the candidates whose names have been submitted to determine if they meet the previously listed Constitutional Qualifications and to be assured of the understanding and commitment to carrying out the duties of a Deacon.

The Deacons present to the church a list of those who are eligible and willing to serve. The church will vote by secret ballot for a number of deacons to be elected. The name(s) receiving the most votes shall be declared elected.

Section 3: Terms of Service - Deacons shall serve a term of three (3) years. After serving a full term, it is recommended that the Deacon take an inactive status for one year. However, in case of an active deacons' absence or lack of candidates, and with the approval of the active Deacons and the

candidate, and by the normal vote of the Church, said Deacon may serve one additional year, with the option at the end of the additional year to either take the one-year inactive status, or be considered for a three year term.

*Section 4: Duties* – Deacons shall at all times consider themselves servants of Christ through the Church. With the pastor, and as the Holy Spirit may direct, they are to make recommendations to the Church pertaining to its work and progress. They shall seek to know the spiritual, moral and physical need of the members of the Church and community, and shall serve in the cause of Christ by relieving, encouraging and strengthening those in need. They are to assist the pastor in these various ministries and workings of the church, so that the pastor may be more devoted to prayer, the ministry of the Word, and the general oversight of the church.

The Deacons shall arrange for regular meetings and such committees as are necessary to the discharge of their duties. They shall elect annually a chairman and secretary. The deacons shall also have the responsibility filling the pulpit in case of emergency absence or resignation of the Senior Pastor until the Pastor Search Committee is elected, at which time the responsibility will become theirs.

### **C. Trustees**

The Church shall elect three members to serve as trustees. Their term of office shall be for three years. They shall be members in good standing who are actively interested in the Church. They shall be elected upon recommendation of the nominating committee. Having served a previous term shall not disqualify a member for re-election.

The Trustees shall, as provided by law and the action of the Church, hold in trust the title to all property of the Church and shall represent the Church in all matters of legal responsibility regarding the purchase, improvement, and disposal of Church property. They shall execute all legal papers relating to the Church and to the community as the Church may direct. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property of the Church without a specific vote of the Church authorizing such action.

#### **D. Clerk**

The Clerk shall be elected annually upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee and shall be a member in good standing. It shall be the duty of the Clerk to attend the Church business meetings, to maintain an accurate record of all business transactions, to prepare the annual associational letter, and to notify all officers, members of committees, and messengers of their election or appointment.

The Clerk shall issue letters of dismissal as authorized by the Church, preserve all papers and valuable letters and records that belong to the Church, and preserve a true history of the Church. It shall also be the duty of the Clerk to keep an accurate roll of the Church membership with dates and methods of admission, dismissal, change in name, correct mailing address and other pertinent information. The Clerk shall give legal notice of all meetings where such notice is necessary.

#### **E. Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall be elected annually upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee and preferred to be a member in good standing. The Treasurer shall receive deposit records from the Counting Committee, bank generated deposit receipts, and maintain accurate records of the various checking and savings accounts and investments of the Church. The Treasurer shall make all disbursements upon proper authority for all authorized expenditures representing the financial program of the Church.

The Treasurer shall make a report of all receipts, expenditures, and balances at the regular monthly business meeting of the Church and at other times as requested by the Church. Copies of reports shall be kept by the Church Clerk as a part of the permanent record of the Church.

An annual audit of the Treasurer's records shall be made within thirty (30) days of the end of the fiscal year by the Trustees or their agent. All books, records, and accounts kept by the Church shall be delivered to the Church periodically to be preserved as a permanent record of the Church. All these items shall be delivered to the Church upon the election of a successor.

## **F. Moderator**

The Moderator and Assistant Moderator shall be elected annually upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee and shall be a member in good standing. The Moderator shall preside at all Church business meetings. The Assistant Moderator shall preside when the Moderator is absent. In the absence of both, the Clerk shall call the Church to order and a Moderator Pro-Tem shall be elected. The Moderator shall be a layperson and may serve successive terms. All parliamentary procedures shall be consistent with *Robert's Rules of Order* unless otherwise stated in the Constitution or By-Laws.

## **G. Financial Secretary**

The Financial Secretary shall be elected annually upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee. The Financial Secretary shall receive the collection envelopes after the money has been removed and counted by the Counting Committee, and from these shall give donor individual credit as provided in the approved record system. The Financial Secretary shall also be responsible for preparing and mailing annual statements to all contributing members.

## **H. Ministerial and Support Staff**

Other officers of the Church, including heads of various teaching, training, and missionary organizations of the Church, shall be elected annually by the Church upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee and shall be a member in good standing.

These organizations shall be under Church control, all officers being elected by the Church, be a member in good standing, and report regularly to the Church. It is understood that the Pastor is ex-officio head of all the organizations, and his leadership is to be recognized in them. These organizations shall follow the methods and procedures generally adopted by the respective agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention.

All staff members shall be elected by the Church and shall be under the general supervision of the Pastor, aided by such committees as may be specifically designated for that purpose.

## **I. Employees**

Persons may be employed by the church for non - ministerial and/or administrative duties as deemed necessary by the church. They shall be elected or hired by the church. Membership may or may not be required. These shall not include any contractual employment of persons and/or companies by committees.

## **III. CHURCH COMMITTEES**

*Section 1.* The Church shall elect such standing committees and special committees as it may deem necessary to carry on the various phases of the program of the Church effectively and efficiently.

*Section 2.* Election and duties.

### **A. Personnel Committee**

The Personnel Committee shall be elected annually by the church upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee. It shall have sufficient members, all in good standing. They shall be responsible for determining that the policies of the Personnel Handbook are carried out.

### **B. Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee shall be elected annually by the church upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee. It shall have sufficient members, all in good standing. They shall have oversight of and offer assistance, when needed, to the Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer and the Counting Committee.

### **C. Budget Committee**

The Budget Committee, composed of five (5) members, shall be elected each September by ballot vote of the Church. They shall prepare and submit to the Church for approval, by the December Business Meeting, an inclusive budget, indicating by item the amount needed and sought for all local expenses and purposes, and in like manner for all denominational or other approved non-local causes.

#### **D. Counting Committee**

The Counting Committee shall be composed of as many three-member teams as deemed necessary and recommended by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Church. At least two (2) of these members should be present whenever funds are received and counted. The duties are specified in the Operations Manual.

#### **E. Nominating Committee**

This committee shall be composed of five (5) members. Three (3) members of the Nominating Committee shall be elected by ballot vote of the Church, one (1) of whom must be a deacon. The three (3) members shall then nominate a Sunday School Director and a Missions Director, who after being elected by the Church, will serve as members of the Nominating Committee. These five (5) shall constitute the Committee. The Nominating Committee shall present nominations for all officers in the Church except the Pastor, other paid staff and deacons.

#### **F. Church Council**

The Church Council shall be elected annually by the church upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee. It shall have a minimum of five (5) members, all in good standing. It will serve as a forum for church leaders in planning, coordinating, and evaluating the total work of the church.

#### **G. Other Committees and Ministry Teams**

Such other committees and ministry teams as the Church may deem advisable to promote the most effective and efficient completion of its mission may be elected by the Church.

## **IV. MEETINGS**

*Section 1. Worship* – Public services shall be held on the Lord’s Day and on some regular evening(s) of each week.

The Lord’s Supper shall be observed on the first Sunday of the second month in the quarter, or at such time as the Church may determine. The Deacons shall constitute a committee on the Lord’s Supper and related needs thereto.

Other meetings may be convoked by the Pastor at his discretion, or by vote of the Church.

*Section 2. Business* – A regular stated business meeting of the Church shall be held monthly, unless by special arrangement changed by the Church.

Special business meetings may be called by the Moderator, Pastor, Deacons, Trustees, Committee, or by the Clerk (upon written application signed by at least five (5) members of the Church).

## **V. DISCIPLINE**

Should any unhappy differences arise between members, the aggrieved member shall follow, in a tender and loving spirit, the rules given by Jesus in Matthew 18:15-20. Each member shall make every effort to settle the difficulty through the mutual seeking of pardon and forgiveness from God and from one another.

Should any case of gross breach of Covenant or public scandal occur, the Deacons shall endeavor to remove the offense, with the advice and counsel of the Pastor. If their efforts shall fail, they shall report the case to the Church for its consideration and action, possibly leading to the dismissal of the offender from membership.

In the case of grave difficulty within the Church, no solution seeming possible, the Church may request the advice of mutual council, made up of judicious pastors and members from sister churches. Such council, if called, shall serve only in an advisory capacity.

## **VI. QUORUM**

In regular business meetings the assembled members shall constitute a quorum, provided; 1) Matters to be considered, other than regular reports or discussion, have been previously announced; 2) Other matters than stated above shall require ten members present and voting.

In special called meetings, the assembled group shall be authorized to proceed with special business if; 1) The purpose of the meeting has been announced on the Lord's Day at least one (1) week prior to the meeting; 2) Three-fourths (3/4) of the members present vote.

## **VII. ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS**

*Section 1. Amendments* – These By-Laws may be amended, altered, or repealed by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the members present and voting at any regular business meeting of the Church or at any specially called meeting for that purpose, provided such amendment, alteration, or repeal as it is proposed shall be presented to the Church at least thirty (30) days before the time the vote is taken, and shall be read from the pulpit to the congregation on the Lord's Day following its being presented to the Church.

*Section 2. Adoption* – These By-Laws shall be considered adopted and in immediate effect if and when this Church votes in favor of the same. Adoption shall require the approval of three-fourths (3/4) of the members present and voting.

## **VII. PRESERVATION**

A copy of this Constitution and By-Laws shall at all times be kept by the Church Clerk among his records, and another copy shall be kept in the Church office, and all amendments to or revisions thereof shall, after passage by the Church, be prepared and be made available to the Church members generally upon request.

## **AMENEMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION:**

Nov. 2010 – Section II By-Laws, Part II Church Officers,  
Item B. – Deacons

Feb. 2016 – Section II By-Laws, Part III Church Committees,  
Item D. – Purchasing Committee

May 2016 – Section II Bylaws, part II Church Officers, Item E – Treasurer.  
Section II Bylaws, part II Church Officers, Item C – Trustees.

May 2016 – Section II Bylaws, part III – Church Committees –  
Item C. Budget Committee.

Section II Bylaws, part III – Church Committees –  
Item D - Finance Committee.

Nov. 2017 – By-Laws, Sect. II, wording throughout.

By-Laws, Sect II, Part B, Sect 4 – Deacons Duties.

By-Laws, Sect. III, Part A, - addition of Personnel Committee.

By-Laws, Sect III, Part C – Budget Committee –  
Change of Date.

By-Laws, Sect VII – Adoption and Amendments –  
Change of time frame.