

Constitution/ Bylaws

Smith Valley Baptist Church

“Let all things be done decently and in order.” - 1 Cor. 14:40

Preamble

We establish this Constitution/ Bylaws according to the belief that our existence as a local body of believers is in accordance with the New Testament model of church. As such a body, this constitution will help to preserve and govern us in an orderly manner, as well as ensure the liberties of each individual member.

While there is no evidence of a written Constitution/Bylaws in the New Testament church, it is obvious that a structure was in place to appropriately address issues of church polity (government):

- Practical administration – Acts 1:15-26; 4:32-37; 6:1-8; 9:23-31; 11:27-30; 13:1-3
- Doctrinal decisions – Acts 11:1-24; 15:1-35; 16:1-5; 21:17-26
- Church discipline – Mt. 18:15-17; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Co. 5:1-8; Ga. 6:1-5; Titus 1:10-14

Certainly the early church gives evidence that structural government is within the approved will of God. The complexity of our day demands that this body be prepared to accommodate the work of ministry in the most expedient manner possible. This Constitution/Bylaws, being set forth in direct subordination to the Holy Scriptures, will assist this body in being consistent in the applications of church polity. Its contents must never fall outside the general parameters of Scripture, which shall remain our only objective, infallible standard.

This Constitution/Bylaws will serve to bring into focus our identity, polity, unity, and duty as the body of Christ.

Article I: Name

This local body of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ shall be known as Smith Valley Baptist Church, located in the area known as Smith Valley, Nevada.

Article II: Objectives

Our purpose is to worship the true and living God of the Holy Scriptures by bringing others into a relationship with our God through His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. We will endeavor to grow the fellowship of God's people with Himself through the Guidance of the Holy Scriptures and by the power of the Holy Spirit. In short, it is our task to reach, win, disciple, and send.

Article III: Basic Beliefs

We believe the irreducible common denominator for Christians of this and all denominations involves the essence of Jesus Christ: His eternal existence, immaculate conception, sinless life, atoning death, bodily resurrection, heavenly ascension and literal return. The Bible is God's only record proclaiming that this Jesus is the sum of mankind's hope for eternal life. As such, we enthusiastically elevate God's Word to the place of pre-eminence in this body.

This church further subscribes to the doctrinal statements of "The Baptist Faith and Message," as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963, excepting the following statement: "...it (baptism) is prerequisite... to the Lord's Supper" (p13). Although we understand baptism to be a church ordinance, we do not believe the unbaptized are forbidden from communion, only the unregenerated (unsaved).

Article IV: Church Covenant

"But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased." - 1 Cor. 12:18

First, we covenant with our God to participate regularly and faithfully in the corporate worship of Him. We also joyfully promise to consistently allow God to increase our fellowship with Christ through persistent prayer and devotions, as well as diligent Bible study. We further contract to be wise and obedient stewards of all the resources God has entrusted to us, both materially and spiritually.

Second, we covenant with one another to patiently disciple, edify, encourage, comfort, admonish, and forgive each other in the spirit of brotherly love. We also commit to pray regularly for each other to the end that we bear one another's burdens inasmuch as possible. We agree not to gossip about or malign one another, but to speak the truth in love, communicating with conviction, yet in tenderness rather than anger.

Third, we covenant with the world around us to pray for its spiritual condition, as well as for families, governments, and other social institutions. We pledge both our resources and our energy to evangelizing the world with the true gospel message of salvation in **Jesus Christ alone**. We humbly accept our role of being a voice of morality, and will strive to present a consistent model so that the world is directed to Jesus by the example of our lives as well as by the testimony of our words.

Article V: Polity and Relationships

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. Persons duly received by the members shall constitute the membership. (See Article I of the Bylaws).

All internal groups created and empowered by the church shall report to and be accountable only to the church, unless otherwise specified by church action.

This church 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 Baptist churches. We also may choose to cooperate with and support other groups who share in the work of Christ's Great Commission.

All holdings, both financial and material will belong to this church. Upon the Dissolution of the Corporation, the Corporation shall, after paying or making provision for payment of all the liabilities of the Corporation, distribute all of the assets of the Corporation to another church of like faith and order, that is a qualified charitable organization under Sections 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or corresponding section of any future federal code, which will be determined by church actions and shall require at three quarters (3/4) of the vote of the members present at such meetings. This paragraph shall only be amended by an affirmative vote of 90% of the members in good standing, age 16 and above, present and voting.

Bylaws

Article I. Church Membership

1. General

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of scriptural self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church. The membership also reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

2. Candidacy

- A. Any person who trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, makes a public profession of that faith, and agrees to covenant with this body may present him/herself at any regular church meeting to become a member of Smith Valley Baptist Church.
- B. Although, Scriptural baptism is not a prerequisite to church membership, we affirm that all believers should be Scripturally Baptized in obedience to the Holy Scriptures.
 - (1) Scriptural baptism is accomplished under these auspices:
 - a. Profession of faith (mental assent and practical obedience) in Jesus Christ. (Acts 2:41; 8:37-38)
 - b. A symbolic act of obedience, not salvific (bringing salvation). (Ro. 6:3-7; 1 Pe. 3:21)
 - c. Mode of baptism is immersion. (Acts 8:38; Col. 2:12)
 - (2) Acceptable evidence of scriptural baptism:
 - a. Transfer of letter from another Baptist church, or
 - b. Statement by candidate testifying that scriptural baptism has taken place
- C. General mandates concerning scriptural baptism (for information only):
 - (1) **Jesus participated in baptism** as an example for us. In Mt. 3:13-17, immersion into water signifies immersion into God's ordained work.
 - (2) **Jesus commanded baptism.** In Mt. 28:19, immersion into water represents immersion into God's character (Name).
 - (3) In Ro. 6:3-7, immersion into water reflects death to sin and resurrection to new life.
 - (4) In Mk. 1:4 and Acts 2:38, immersion into water expresses the desire for repentance, and to have one's sins washed away.
 - (5) In almost every instance in the early New Testament church, when the gospel is preached and accepted, baptism is an integral and immediate act of identifying

with the body of Christ, in both the local sense (implicit) and the universal sense (explicit). (Acts 2:38-47; 8:12; 8:37-38; 9:17-18; 10:44-48; 16:14-15; 16:33; 18:8; 19:5)

D. Decision not to covenant with this church body

All people are continuously welcome to participate in all regular church meetings, as well as to receive blessings of ministry and fellowship from the congregation, irrespective of church membership. However, certain church leadership positions, as well as selected public relations endeavors and voting privileges will be for members only, in accordance with this Constitution/Bylaws and/or Operations Manual.

Should there be dissent as to any candidate, such dissent shall be referred to the Elder Board for investigation and the making of a recommendation to the church within 30 days. A three-fourths (3/4) of members of this church in good standing, present and voting shall be required to elect such candidates to membership.

3. Responsibilities of members

- A. New members are required to publicly read and affirm the church covenant as a statement of intention in the presence of the church family at a regular church meeting.
- B. Every member of this church in good standing age 16 and above is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference, provided the member is present or provision has been made for absentee balloting.
- C. All members of this church in good standing are eligible for consideration as candidates for elective offices in the church, provided they meet scriptural qualifications of that office.

4. Termination of membership

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

- A. Death of the member, or
- B. Dismission to another Baptist church, or
- C. Exclusion by action of this church (see section 5, below), or
- D. Erasure upon request (see section 5, below), or
- E. Sustained participation in another church

5. Discipline

It shall be the practice of this church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The pastor, elders, deacons, staff, and other members of the church are available for counsel and guidance. That attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption.

The “good standing” clause in this Constitution/Bylaws relates to the responsibilities of church members to be faithful in their commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ, true to Bible doctrine, and attentive to the church covenant. The Elder Board shall investigate and make recommendations to the church when questions arise concerning the good standing of a member of this church. However, whenever possible, an earnest effort will first be made by the board to encourage the troubled member to restore him/herself, before any action is taken to present the situation to the church.

Should a serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of this church, the pastor and the elders will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accord with the Scriptures, seeking inasmuch as possible to restore such an individual without church action.

If it becomes necessary for the church to take any kind of action toward a troubled member, a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the members of this church in good standing, age 16 and above, present and voting is required. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance.

Upon the recommendations of the Elder Board, the church may also vote to rescind any previous action of discipline, including restoring membership, upon request of the previous disciplined person, and upon evidence of that individual’s repentance and reformation. Such action shall be according to the same guidelines as in the previous paragraph.

In the event that a church member who has become the subject of church discipline, or a former member who has requested erasure to prevent or escape church discipline, chooses to affiliate with another congregation, that congregation may be informed in writing of the status of such discipline, but not the specific nature of the problem, unless violation of the law is involved. This shall be accomplished by the Elder Board.

If a Baptist church requests a troubled member’s church letter be transferred, a written statement that such member is under discipline may accompany the member’s church letter. A member who has been disciplined, reconciled, and restored shall not have his/her previous record divulged to another congregation unless the previous infraction constituted a violation of the law.

All matters relating to any church discipline shall be documented and kept in protected privacy, except for actions taken in open church meetings, which are a part of the church minutes.

Article II. Church Officers and Committees

All who serve as officers of this church, as well as those serving on the Constitution/ Bylaws committee and the stewardship committee shall be members in good standing of this church.

1. Church Officers

Overview

Smith Valley Baptist Church is a theocracy (meaning, "God rules.") The Senior Pastor is the spiritual leader of the congregation. He sets the pace for ministry and vision. The Elders are to work in harmony with the Senior Pastor and all pastoral staff in leading our church in a spirit of humility, with each one regarding one another before himself. Elders should be pure, "prayed up" and "in tune with God" at each meeting or release themselves from the activities of that gathering. Elders are to lead by example by being servant-leaders of the Church.

The principal ministry of the Elders consists of overseeing (and joining in on) the ministry of the church in all aspects. Deacons, like Elders are servant-leaders. Though Elders have oversight over most facets of the effort, they shall work close at hand with the Deacons in delegating to them ministry and member care responsibilities they deem necessary in order to fulfill the mission and ministry goals of SVBC.

SVBC will be a "pastor-led" congregation (vs. "pastor-driven" where all decisions are made by pastors' only). As our congregation grows larger and larger, it will be necessary for the day-to-day operations of our church's ministry to be the responsibility of the Pastors. The elders shall be "big picture" men and prayerfully seek with our Pastors the vision, direction, and ministries of SVBC.

The officers of this church shall be the pastor, elders, church staff, clerk and treasurer. The offices of clerk and treasurer will be voted on annually. Nominations for these offices will originate from the Elder board, who after prayer and due consideration shall present to the congregation one consensus candidate's name for each position. Each of these candidates will then be voted on separately, and an affirmative vote of greater than 50% of church members in good standing, age 16 above, present and voting shall be necessary to elect each candidate to office.

A. Pastor

The pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. He will lead the congregation, the organizations, and the church officers to perform their tasks. In this church, the pastor will serve as an ex-officio (standing) member of every committee, but will also encourage each committee to choose its most capable member as chairperson.

The pastor is leader of pastoral ministries in the church. As such, he works with the elders and church staff to (1) lead the church in the achievement of its mission, (2) proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers, and (3) care for the church's members and other persons in the community.

A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. The election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's public notice in a regular church meeting has been given.

A pastor selection committee shall be selected by the elder board to seek out a suitable pastor, and its recommendation will constitute a nomination. Any church member has the privilege of making other nominations according to the policy established by the church. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one name at a time. Elections shall be by secret ballot, an affirmative vote of 90% of those members in good standing, age 16 and above, present and voting is necessary for a choice. The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or the church's request. He shall preside at meetings of this church.

The pastor may relinquish the office by giving at least a two weeks' notice to the church at the time of resignation. The church may declare the office of pastor to be vacant. Such action shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's public notice in a regular church meeting has been given. An affirmative vote of 90% of those members in good standing, age 16 and above, present and voting is necessary to declare the office vacant. The meeting may be called upon the recommendation of a super majority of the elder board. The moderator for this meeting shall be determined by the elder board. The vote to declare the office vacant shall be according to the same guidelines as the previous paragraph (election of pastor). Except in instances of gross misconduct by the pastor so excluded from office, the church will compensate the pastor with not less than one month's total normal compensation. The termination shall be immediate and the compensation shall be rendered in not more than thirty days.

B. Elders

1. Qualifications

A summary of qualifications of an elder is as follows: **1. A blameless/righteous life** (cf. Titus 1:6-8; 1 Timothy 3:2,9); **2. Even-tempered** (cf. 1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7-8); **3. A lover of that which is good and honorable** (cf. 1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:8); **4. One who holds to the Bible and Southern Baptist Doctrine** (cf. Titus 1:9); **5. Good managers of their households** (cf. 1 Timothy 3:2, 4, Titus 1:6). **6. Able to teach** (cf. 1 Timothy 3:2); **7. A sober and sound mind** (cf. 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:7); **8. Spiritual maturity** (cf. 1 Tim 3:6); **9. Must be a male** (cf. 1 Timothy 3:2; 2:11-12).

It shall be the policy of SVBC to elect men of proven spiritual maturity. Each Elder shall serve for three years and then take a sabbatical for at least one year before being eligible for re-election to the Elder Board. He shall also have been a member in good standing of this church for at least 3 years.

2. Duties

1. Administrative—overseeing the work of the church as stewards of God (cf. Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 5:2-3);
2. Pastoral—shepherding the church and feeding the flock (cf. Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2);
3. Educational—teaching the church on issues of spiritual maturity (cf. 1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:9);
4. Officiative—participating in the ministry activities of the church (cf. James 5:14; Acts 14:23);
5. Representative—representing the church (cf. 26 Acts 20:17-31).

Based on the above, it shall be the duty of Elders to join with the Senior Pastor of the church and oversee the work of SVBC. The Senior Pastor has extensions of his ministry via Associate Pastors. The Senior Pastor and the Elder Board, along with the Associate Pastors shall make up the Leadership Council of SVBC. This Council shall function in accordance with the By-Laws of SVBC but be it understood that the Senior Pastor (voting), the elders (voting), and the associate pastors (ex officio-voting) shall:

1. Select, hire, and remove all support staff of the church (excluding pastors);
2. Oversee the financial operations of the church, including budgeting, disbursements, and accounting of both general and designated receipts of the church;
3. Prayerfully develop, promote and lead in the vision, ministries, and mission of the church;
4. Cooperate with the deacons in assisting the Senior Pastor in the administration of the church ordinances and pastoral care of the church;
5. Resolve all personal and/or corporate disputes within the body;
6. Prayerfully carry forth all business and ministry decisions of the church except the dismissal and calling of any pastor. In pastoral cases, a recommendation on the issues would be brought by a vote of the Elder Board to the church body for ratification in accordance with the By-laws;
7. Bring recommendations to the Church Body for ratification as required in the By-laws: (A) Adoption of the yearly budget; (B) Purchase and sale of all real estate; (C) Any change in these policies regarding Elders and/or the Leadership council, the church By-laws, or the church constitution; and (D) Any other substantial issues, not anticipated in this document, but in the opinion of the Elders should be brought before the church body for input and/or ratification.

3. Election

The Bible teaches that the church needs to conduct a careful investigation to see if a man's life lines up with the biblical qualifications of the office of Elder (cf. 1 Timothy 3:1; Titus 1:5-9). To facilitate the securing of Elders, SVBC shall observe the following guidelines:

1. Recommendations to the Office of Elder shall be made by any active member of the church to the Pastors and/or active Elders.
2. The Pastors and Elders will prayerfully seek God's will for the church. They will recommend and place in nomination, to the members of the church, the names of those deemed qualified for and called to office. Church members will be provided

with biographical information and a witness statement by an active Elder and/or Pastor prior to the vote; 4. A printed ballot will be developed to facilitate a vote by church members only for each candidate to the office of Elder; 5. The ballot shall reflect the number of Elders needed for the full staffing of the Elder Board. Only those who receive 90% “yes” of the total votes (with “abstain” votes not counting) shall be elected and ordained to the Office of Elder.

4. Removal

Elders may be removed from membership on the Council in any of the following ways:

1. Physical Reasons: a. A three-month requested leave of absence - an Elder who is physically sick or physically and/or mentally exhausted may request and receive a three month leave of absence from the board and from his duties (he will be automatically re-instated to the Board after the three months). b. A three month mandated leave of absence - upon the unanimous recommendation of all other Elders, another Elder can be given a mandatory three-month leave of absence because of physical and/or mental health considerations.

2. Personal Reasons: a. An Elder may ask for a leave of absence from Eldership duties for personal reasons, which need to be disclosed only to the Elder Board; b. The Elders Board may: (1) Grant the request, with a vote of the Board, or (2) Deny the request forcing the Elder making the request to either step down from the Board or withdraw the request altogether. (3) Requests for leaves of absence beyond six months must be ratified by the congregation.

3. Scriptural Reasons: a. If at any time in the life of a church, an Elder is found to be in sin of such a nature as to make him no longer scripturally qualified as an Elder, he is then to be removed from Eldership immediately, once the following steps have occurred: (1) The sin has been firmly established upon the testimony of two reliable witnesses or by a confession from the Elder, and (2) By vote, the current Elders agree that the witnesses are reliable, and (3) Should reasonable attempts at remediation and reconciliation be extended without success, it must then be presented to the congregation, and (4) A simple majority of the membership present at a congregational called business meeting votes to remove him.

4. Other Reasons of Incompatibility: If, in the opinion of the Elder Board, an Elder is not demonstrating an earnest commitment to attendance in meetings, he shall be disqualified from the Board by recommendation of the Elder Board and a 90% vote of the congregation.

C. Ministerial staff

The ministerial staff shall be called and employed as the church determines the need for such offices. A job description shall be written by the church elders when the need for a staff member is determined. Those staff members of whom the church requires evidence of a personal call of God to minister shall be recommended to the church by the Elders/ Staff, and called/terminated according to the same voting guidelines as previously described for the pastor. In cases of resignation, at least two weeks’ notice shall be given to the church. Except

in instances of gross misconduct, departing staff will be compensated in the same manner as a departing pastor.

D. Deacons

The scripture is clear that a deacon has a responsibility to care for the practical needs of believers and the body as a whole. A deacon is “one who helps the believers.” Whereas it is not clearly stated, it appears that the origin of the office began in Acts 6:1–6 where seven men were selected to care for the material needs of widows in the congregation. This allowed the apostles to devote their time to prayer and ministry of the Word. This indicates the function of deacons is to be subordinate and auxiliary to the elders and pastors; while the elders and pastors “teach” the congregation, the deacons care for the physical and practical needs of the Body.

1. Qualifications

Biblical: The qualifications of deacons are given in 1 Timothy 3:8–13. Deacons are to be typified by the following characteristics. Men of dignity: they are serious, worthy of the respect of others. Not double tongued: they do not spread conflicting stories in the congregation. Not fond of sordid (or dishonest) gain: they are not greedy for money and do not use their position for financial gain. Holding to the mystery of the faith: they practice what they proclaim. Tested: they have been observed and found to be approved. Good managers of their households: they are qualified to manage church affairs because they can manage their own home affairs.

Practical: A Deacon should be a member in good standing for at least one year at SVBC, be at least 21 years of age, and be growing in their Christian faith and maturity in the Lord. His beliefs should be in line with the current statement of the Baptist Faith and Message and any and all other doctrinal statements endorsed by SVBC. The two primary differences between an elder and a deacon are spiritual maturity and responsibility within the body (i.e., elders are teachers, leaders and administrators; the deacons are the servants of the body.)

2. Duties

The Deacons at SVBC are a serving body to the staff, elders, and the church as a whole. The Deacons at SVBC are not involved in administrative policy making, church operations, or church management as a “deacon board.” Deacons will be “ministry orientated” and do carry out the following Scriptural tasks which are so important in the life of a growing congregation.

1. Freeing of the Ministers - Not so much “freeing the ministers from” but “freeing the ministers to” be more effective in responsibilities.

2. Promoters of Church Harmony - One inescapable duty of the Deacon in the New Testament church is the protection of the church fellowship (i.e. church unity).

3. Welfare of the Membership - Our church has multiple needs and it may be possible that our Pastors and Elders cannot minister effectively alone. The deacons will assist the Pastors in ministry and hospital visits as well as securing the building.

4. More Effective Witness - It is very evident that this “Deacon” office was established in order that the church might give a more effective witness and display a Godly reputation throughout the community.

5. Servant hood - The English word for “Deacon” is transliterated from the Greek word δίακονος which means “a servant.”

3. Election

The Bible teaches that the church needs to conduct a careful investigation to see if a man’s life lines up with the biblical qualifications of the office of Deacon (cf. 1 Timothy 3:1; Titus 1:5-9). To facilitate the securing of Deacons, SVBC shall observe the following guidelines:

1. Recommendations to the ministry of Deacon shall be made by any active member of the church to the Pastors and/or active Elders. 2. The Pastors and Elders will prayerfully seek God’s will for the church. They will recommend and place in nomination, to the members of the church, the names of those deemed qualified for and called to office. 3. Church members will be provided with biographical information prior to the vote. 4. A printed ballot will be developed to facilitate a vote by church members only for each candidate to the ministry of Deacon; 5. The ballot shall reflect the number of Deacons qualified to the ministry of Deacon. Only those who receive 75% “yes” of the total votes (with “abstain” votes not counting) shall be elected and ordained to the ministry of Deacon. There shall be no obligation to constitute as an assigned deacon one who has been a deacon in another church, but in such instances as one might be chosen for an assignment as a deacon, his previous ordination by another Baptist church shall suffice also for this church. In all cases an ordination council consisting of other ordained Baptists must have affirmed any deacon candidate prior to this church’s vote.

4. Removal

Deacons may serve continuously until death, removal, or resignation. In the event of removal, recommendation must be made by majority vote of the Elder Board and an affirmative vote of greater than 75% of members in good standing, age 16 and above, present and voting is required. One who is involuntarily removed from the office of deacon may be reinstated by the same parameters, provided Scriptural restoration has taken place.

E. Clerk

The church shall elect annually a clerk as its clerical officer. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a suitable record of all official actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a register of names of members, with dates of admission, dismissal, death, or erasure, together with a record of baptisms. The clerk shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church, preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give required notice of all meetings where notice is necessary, as

indicated in these Bylaws. The clerk shall be responsible for preparing the annual letter of the church to the association. The church may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to a church secretary who will assist the elected clerk. All church records are church property and shall be kept in the church office when an office is maintained.

F. Treasurer

The church shall elect annually a church treasurer as its financial officer. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel, all money or things of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the church at each regular business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements of the resources God has entrusted to the care of SVBC. The treasurer's report and records shall be audited annually by the stewardship committee. The fiscal year shall run concurrently with the church year, which is October 1 through September 30.

2. Church Committees

The committees of this church shall be an Elder Board, Constitution/ Bylaws Committee, and the stewardship committee. Any other committees that the church deems necessary will be appointed by and overseen by the Elder Board.

A. The Constitution/ Bylaws Committee

This committee works under the leadership of the Elder Board and is a standing committee until further church action may amend its status. Its duties shall be to continue to expand/amend the Constitution/Bylaws as this congregation develops. The recommendations for changes shall be voted on by the church in accordance with amendment procedures contained herein. The Committee, elected annually, shall consist of up to four members.

B. The Stewardship Committee

This committee develops and recommends an overall stewardship development plan, a unified church budget, and budget subscription plans. It advises and recommends in the administration of gifts of church members and others, using sound principles of biblical financial management. It works with the treasurer in the preparation and presentation to the church of required reports regarding the financial affairs of the church. It shall also audit the church's financial records annually and report the results to the church.

Article III. Other Church Workers

1. Volunteer Workers

Such positions not already identified as are normally filled with volunteers shall be coordinated through the Elder Board. This shall be accomplished annually, or as vacancies occur or as need arises. The Elder Board shall determine which of these volunteer positions may be filled by nonmembers.

2. Nonministerial staff

These shall be employed as the church determines the need for their services. The Elder Board shall have the authority to employ and to terminate services of nonministerial staff members. Such employment and termination of services shall be with the recommendation of the supervising staff member and, as appropriate, the consultation of related committees of the church.

Article IV. Church Ordinances

1. Baptism

- A. Baptism shall be by immersion in water by the pastor, or whomever the church shall authorize
- B. Deacons or other designees may assist in preparations.
- C. Baptism may be administered at any time/location as agreed upon by consensus of the church.

2. The Lord's Supper

The church shall observe the Lord's Supper as deemed appropriate by congregational consensus. The pastor and his appointees shall administer the supper. Participation in this ordinance shall be open, with each individual being responsible for examination of him/herself. The Supper shall always be precluded with adequate explanation of the meaning of participation.

Article V. Church Meetings

1. Weekly

Weekly worship of Almighty God and Bible study shall take place as the church deems appropriate. The pastor/Elder Board or their designee shall direct these meetings.

2. Business Meetings

The church shall hold an annual business meeting. This meeting should be scheduled close to the end of the fiscal year (September).

3. Special Business Meetings

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

4. Parliamentary Rules

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church.

Article VI. Amendments

Changes in the Constitution/Bylaws may be made by submitting suggestions to the Elder Board. The Elder Board, after conferring with the Constitution/Bylaws Committee shall make a recommendation to the church for a vote. Amendments shall be approved by three-fourths vote of the church members in good standing, age 16 and above, present and voting except for the final paragraph of Article V: Polity and Relationships, which shall require at least a 90% affirmative vote of members in good standing, ages 16 and above.