



CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

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CONSTITUTION

Preamble

We declare and establish this Constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the body in an orderly manner. This Constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual church member and the freedom of action of this body in relation to other churches.

Article I. Name

This body known as Liberty Baptist Church is a multi-site church (hereinafter referred to as the “Church”).

Article II. Mission Statement

The mission of the Church is to be a dynamic spiritual body empowered by the Holy Spirit to change lives, communities and the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Article III. Statement of Basic Beliefs

We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired Word of God and the basis for our beliefs. This Church accepts the doctrinal statement of The Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in the year 2000; however, God's Word as revealed in the Holy Bible is the sole authority in matters of faith and practice. The two ordinances of this Church are believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Article IV. Church Ordinances

Section 1. Baptism

This Church believes that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus (Acts: 2:40-42; Acts 8:26-40; Romans 6:1-4).

Any person who has received Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith, who professes Him and who indicates a commitment to follow Him as Lord shall be received by the Church for the ordinance of baptism.

- A. Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
- B. The Senior Pastor, or whomever the Senior Pastor (or the Church) shall authorize, shall administer baptism.
- C. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship.

Section 2. Lord's Supper

This Church believes that the Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby believers in Jesus Christ, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming (Matthew 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:14-23; 1 Corinthians 11:27-34).

Observance of the Lord's Supper shall be scheduled by the Senior Pastor and Deacon Chairman.

Article V. Licensing and Ordination

Section 1. License

In the event a member of this Church requests the Church to grant him a license to preach, he shall first be required to submit to an examination by the Senior Pastor and the Deacon Chairman, or the Senior Pastor and a committee appointed for that purpose by the Deacon Chairman. The purpose of this examination would be to affirm the applicant's call and determine fitness to preach under a license of this Church. Upon recommendation of the Senior Pastor and Deacon Chairman, the said member will be licensed.

Section 2. Ordination

In the event this Church is requested to ordain a member to the ministry, the Senior Pastor and Deacon Chairman will select an Examining Council to affirm the candidate's call and determine fitness for the ministry. The Examining Council shall consist of not less than three (3) ordained Pastors and three (3) Deacons. Upon receiving a recommendation from the Examining Council, the said member will be ordained.

Article VI. Church Membership

Section 1. Qualifications of Members

Any person may present themselves as candidates for membership in this church. To do so, they must follow the process outlined in the Bylaws and meet the following qualifications:

- A. Make a profession of faith in and commitment to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord followed by believer's baptism (immersion after profession of faith); or
- B. Upon reaffirmation of faith in and commitment to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and by:
 - 1. Request for believer's baptism, followed by baptism or
 - 2. Letter of transfer from another Southern Baptist Church or
 - 3. Statement of previous Baptist membership or
 - 4. Statement of believer's baptism.

Section 2. Termination of Membership

Membership in this Church may terminate for any of the following reasons:

- A. Death of a member.
- B. Letters of transfer may be granted to any church of similar beliefs and practices for members in good standing. When letters are granted, membership in this Church will terminate.
- C. When members of this Church join a church of different beliefs and practices, membership in this Church will terminate, and no letter will be granted.

- D. The name of any member of the church may be immediately dropped from the roll upon his or her request. Such request must be either in writing or spoken in the presence of at least two members of the Church. Such removal of names from the roll requires no action of the Church but must be authorized and implemented by the Deacons.
- E. Dismissal of a member by Church Discipline as set forth in the Bylaws.

Article VII. Statement on Marriage and Sexuality

We believe that marriage unites one man and one woman in a lifetime commitment to each other (Genesis 2:23-24; Matthew 19:4-6). Marriage provides for intimate companionship, pure sexual expression (Genesis 2:25; Ephesians 5:31-33), procreation, and reflects the relationship of Christ and the Church (Genesis 1:28; Proverbs 5:15-19; 1 Corinthians 7:1-5). A husband is commanded to love his wife as Christ loved the Church. A wife is commanded to submit to her husband as the Church submits to Christ (Ephesians 5:22-33).

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one man and one woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance (Genesis 2:24; Genesis 19:5, 13; Genesis 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4). Such sinful pattern, if not repented, will be a barrier to membership and leadership in this body of believers.

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the Church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, or who are members of the Church, must abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking his mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of the Church.

Article VIII. Polity and Relationships

The governance of this Church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. Persons duly received by the members shall constitute the membership.

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 cooperation, which is common among Southern Baptist Churches. This Church will cooperate with and support the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia and the Southern Baptist Convention unless otherwise specified by Church action. It will also comply with the laws of the United States of America, The Commonwealth of Virginia, and the localities where our multi-site campuses exist, unless they conflict with the Holy Scriptures.

Article IX. Amendments

The Constitution shall be kept in the Church office and made available to any member of the Church. The Chairman of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee shall maintain the official copy of the Constitution in coordination with the Church staff. Suggested changes to the Constitution shall be made in writing to the Constitution and Bylaws Committee. After review, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee shall present the prospective change with their comments for review and either approval or disapproval by the Senior Pastor, Executive Pastor, Business Administrator, Deacon Chairman, Deacon Vice Chairman, and Deacon Recording Secretary. Approval of this group requires four (4) out of the six (6) members voting in favor. If approved, the prospective changes with the Constitution and Bylaws Committee's comments shall be brought to the Church during a business meeting for distribution and voted on at the next business meeting after four (4) weeks but not more than ten (10) weeks later. Amendments to the Constitution shall be by three-fourths (3/4) vote of Church members present and voting.

BYLAWS OF LIBERTY BAPTIST CHURCH

Article I. Church Membership

Section 1. Preamble

Liberty is a Baptist Church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of the Church. Further, the membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this Church and the conditions of such membership.

Section 2. Candidacy for Membership

Candidates for membership become active members in good standing with full privileges upon

- A. Meeting the requirements set forth in the Constitution
- B. Attendance and completion of the New Members Class
- C. Signing the Membership Covenant
- D. Approval of the Deacons

Should there be any dissent as to any candidate for membership, the Body of Deacons and Church staff shall investigate and take appropriate action. A majority vote of the Deacons will be required for someone to obtain membership.

Section 3. Classifications of Membership

- A. Active Member: All persons received into the membership of the Church and who remain active by attendance, communication, or contributions for the most recent six (6) month period shall be considered an active member. Any active member unable to attend due to work assignment (including military deployments), temporary medical conditions, or educational pursuits shall be considered an Active member while the above-mentioned exceptions exist. Active members shall have the right to express their opinions and vote on Church matters at duly called business meetings and may be eligible to hold elected leadership positions.
- B. In Absentia: Persons providentially hindered from attending worship services in person may request membership by any of the ways the Church accepts any candidate; however, if baptism is required and cannot be performed for medical reasons, membership for such persons shall require the approval of the Senior Pastor and Deacons.
- C. Inactive Member: Members who evidence no interest in the Church by attendance, communication, or contribution for six months or longer may be classified as inactive members. Inactive members have neither voice nor vote in Church affairs, and may not hold office. An inactive member may be restored to active membership by reengaging in active participation and by recommendation of the Deacons.

- D. Active Associate Member/Watchcare: All persons who desire a Church fellowship home but have not met all the qualifications for active membership such as baptism, and/or attending the New Members Class, or do not desire to give up their home Church membership, or for any other reasons do not want to become a full active member are considered Active Associate members. Active Associates cannot vote or serve in leadership positions as officers and others designated by the Church, but may serve in any other capacity in the Church. However, they must agree to the Church's governing documents and Statement of Belief. Upon attending the membership class and meeting all the qualifications including baptism, and giving up home Church membership, non-voting Active Associates may become full active voting members. Watchcare-type Membership will fall under this category in that it consists of persons wishing to become part of the fellowship, without transferring their membership. These individuals may do so by presenting themselves at any regular worship service and requesting to come under the watchcare of the Church. Such persons will have all the rights, privileges and responsibilities of active members and can be involved in the Church's pastoral, educational, and mission ministries but as stated above they will not have the right to hold any elected office or to vote in the business meetings of the Church.
- E. Nonresident Member: Members who have become inactive as a result of moving out of the Church's ministry area and have not joined another Church are considered nonresident members. These members have neither voice nor vote in Church affairs and may not hold Church office.

Section 4. Membership Covenant

As noted in Section 2, all members of the Church will be required to sign the Membership Covenant which represents a commitment to the Church body and to personal spiritual growth in the areas specified.

The Membership Covenant will include the following affirmations:

- A. Affirmation of Faith: Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and having been baptized, and being in agreement with the Church's mission, statements, strategy and structure, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the Church family.
- B. Desire to Grow Spiritually: I commit to a continual process of growth in the following areas:
1. Protecting the family by maintaining family devotions and by seeking the salvation of family members and acquaintances.
 2. Protecting the unity of the church by praying for others, using Christian courtesy in speech, being slow to take offense, and by following Church leadership.
 3. Protecting the testimony of the church by actively participating in services, ordinances and, as appropriate, church discipline, by giving cheerfully, and by avoiding activities, temptations and relationships which would diminish our witness.
 4. Sharing in "changing lives" by loving God with all my heart and my neighbor as myself, by inviting and welcoming the unreached to church, by using my spiritual gifts to serve others, and by participating in a small group.
 5. Sharing in "changing communities" by supporting our multi-site campuses, sharing the Gospel with the unreached in my daily activities, and avoiding membership in organizations with beliefs contrary to God's Word.
 6. Sharing in "changing the world" by praying for our missionaries and mission teams, by serving in local or short-term missions as led by the Holy Spirit, and by supporting national and international missions' offerings.

- C. Affirmation of Church governing documents: I have received the Constitution, Bylaws, and their respective articles, including but not limited to those policies dealing with Church discipline, conflict resolution and members' rights and responsibilities, and commit and agree to follow the Constitution, Bylaws, and their respective articles and to be bound by the Church discipline and conflict resolution policies.

Section 5. Termination of Membership

Membership in this Church may terminate for any of the following reasons:

- A. Death of a member.
- B. Letters of transfer may be granted to any church of similar beliefs and practices for members in good standing. When letters are granted, membership in this Church will terminate.
- C. When members of this Church join a church of different beliefs and practices, membership in this Church will terminate, and no letter will be granted.
- D. The name of any member of the church may be immediately dropped from the roll upon his or her request. Such request must be either in writing or spoken in the presence of at least two members of the Church. Such removal of names from the roll requires no action of the Church but must be authorized and implemented by the Deacons.
- E. Dismissal of a member by Church Discipline.

Section 6. Church Discipline

It shall be the practice of this Church to pursue every reasonable measure for peace and reconciliation. Should one member sin against another member or the Body of members (the Church), the aggrieved members shall follow in a tender spirit the rules given by our Lord and Savior in Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; and 1 Thessalonians 5:12-14. The Pastors, the Deacons, and mature Members are available for counsel and guidance to the aggrieved members.

A. The Purpose of Church Discipline

1. The repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined. (Proverbs 15:5 ; 29:15 ; 1 Corinthians 4:14 ; Ephesians 6:4 ; 1 Timothy 3:4-5 ; Hebrews 12:1-11 ; Psalm 119:115 ; 141:5 ; Proverbs 17:10 ; 25:12 ; 27:5 ; Ecclesiastes 7:5 ; Matthew 7:26-27 ; 18:15-17 ; Luke 17:3 ; Acts 2:40 ; 1 Corinthians 5:5 ; Galatians 6:1-5 ; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15 ; 1 Timothy 1:20 ; Titus 1:13-14 ; James 1:22)
2. The instruction in righteousness and good of other Christians, as an example to them. (Proverbs 13:20 ; Romans 15:14 ; 1 Corinthians 5:11 ; 15:33 ; Colossians 3:16 ; 1 Thessalonians 5:14 (note- this is written to the whole Church, not just to leaders); 1 Timothy 5:20 ; Titus 1:11 ; Hebrews 10:24-25)
3. The purity of the Church as a whole. (1 Corinthians 5:6-7 ; 2 Corinthians 13:10; Ephesians 5:27 ; 2 John 10 ; Jude 24 ; Revelation 21:2)
4. The good of our corporate witness to non-Christians. (Proverbs 28:7 ; Matthew 5:13-16 ; John 13:35 ; Acts 5:1-14 ; Ephesians 5:11 ; 1 Timothy 3:7 ; 2 Peter 2:2 ; 1 John 3:10)
5. Supremely for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character. (Deuteronomy 5:11 ; 1 Kings 11:2 ; 2 Chronicles 19:2 ; Ezra 6:21 ; Nehemiah 9:2 ; Isaiah 52:11 ; Ezekiel 36:20 ; Matthew 5:16 ; John 15:8 ; 18:17, 25 ; Romans 2:24 ; 15:5-6 ; 2 Corinthians 6:14 ; 7:1 ; Ephesians 1:4 ; 5:27 ; 1 Peter 2:12)

B. The Procedures for Church Discipline

1. Church members who exhibit a continuing unrepentant lifestyle of sin in regard to doctrine or conduct shall be dealt with according to the Biblical process of Church discipline. This is always to be done for the ultimate goals of glorifying God, purifying the Church, and restoring the individual.
2. The first step in this process shall be for fervent continual prayer to be made on behalf of the member in sin by the one who has knowledge of the sin (James 5:16-20). It shall also be the responsibility of any member of the Church who has knowledge of a member's heresy and/or misconduct to reprove and seek to correct and restore the member in private (Matthew 18:15; Galatians 6:1). If the member repents, and seeks forgiveness, the matter shall be closed and the member considered restored.
3. If the member does not repent, the reproving member shall make one or two other members aware of the offense and go with these witnesses to again reprove and seek to correct and restore (Matthew 18:16).
4. If the member in sin still refuses to heed to the reproof, then it shall be brought to the attention of the Chairman of Deacons.
5. Differences that cannot be resolved will be handled by the Deacons or their designees. In matters of church discipline, the Church has designated the Deacons to act as the representatives of the Church and carry out the effective functioning and discipline of its members according to these Bylaws. The Deacons, in turn, will designate five Deacons/designees who have no personal stake or bias in the matter to serve as a Committee to investigate the matter and make a recommendation to the Deacons. At least one of the five members of this Committee must be an active Deacon. This Committee of five Deacons/designees shall give notice to the unrepentant member of the accusations made against them and provide an opportunity for the member to respond to those accusations. The Deacons, after considering the recommendation of the Committee of five Deacons/designees, shall determine by majority vote if the member should be disciplined. If the Church member is disciplined by the Deacons it will be announced to the members/ministry area they are affiliated with, without revealing the sinful behavior, to carry out the Biblical admonitions to bring about repentance and restoration of the disciplined member.
6. If at any time during the process of Church discipline the member in sin repents, seeks forgiveness and is restored, the process will cease.
7. Disciplinary action shall cease upon notification that a member under discipline has requested withdrawal of membership (see *Article I., Section 5. D.*).
8. If the discipline process results in the removal of Church membership and fellowship, but the former member thereafter meets with the Deacons and is found to be repentant, seeks forgiveness, is restored by a majority vote of the Deacons, and seeks renewal of membership and fellowship, he or she shall be joyfully received as a candidate for membership as provided for in *Article I., Section 2.*

9. These actions shall be carried out with a gentle, loving, and humble servant attitude with sensitivity to God's timing, and with the ultimate goals of glorifying God, purifying the Church, and restoring the individual.
10. The underlying objective of Church discipline is never to punish or banish but to comfort, reprove, correct, and restore.
11. Any member being disciplined must immediately be removed from any Church leadership role.
12. By signing the Membership Covenant, each member agrees with this Church discipline process and agrees that the process as described in this Section represents a final decision on the matter that is not subject to being challenged, appealed or modified in the secular courts.

Article II. Church Trustees and Other Officers

Section 1. Trustees

There shall be three (3) trustees, all of whom shall be Liberty Baptist Church members in full fellowship. The Trustees shall be elected by the Church for staggered terms of three (3) years with one Trustee being elected every three (3) years. No Trustee shall serve for more than nine (9) consecutive years. Trustees may be re-elected after a lapse of three (3) years. If a vacancy occurs among the Trustees, the Pastor and Deacon Chairman shall appoint a trustee to fill the un-expired term. The Trustees shall be authorized to execute legal documents required by law.

Section 2. Moderator

The Senior Pastor shall be the Moderator responsible for moderating all regular and special business sessions of the Church. In his absence, or upon his request, the Senior Pastor can designate the Chairman of the Deacons or some other person to serve as moderator.

Section 3. Church Clerk/Secretary

The Clerk shall be elected annually by the members. It shall be his/her duty to attend, or be represented at all Church Business Meetings, and in cooperation with the Church office to keep minutes of regular and special meetings. The Clerk shall also maintain an up-to-date Church Roll of the Members and sign all Letters of Dismissal as authorized by the Church.

Section 4. Treasurer

The Chairman of the Stewardship Committee shall also serve as the Church Treasurer. The description of the duties for this position is listed in the Policies and Procedures Manual.

Article III. Church Committees

Section 1. Church Standing Committees

Membership. Membership on all Standing Committees shall be limited to active members of Liberty Baptist Church. The optimum number of all Standing Committees is six (6) persons, unless stated otherwise. The Standing Committees are as follows:

1. Personnel Committee
2. Constitution and Bylaws Committee
3. Stewardship Committee

No one shall serve on more than one (1) Standing Committee. All Standing Committees shall rotate one third (1/3) of their members each year. Members should be elected by the Church for three (3) year terms. A one (1) year break between terms is recommended. Deacons elected to serve as the Deacon Representative on a specified Standing Committee shall be an active status Deacon. Should the Deacon term expire prior to the Standing Committee term, the Deacon will be permitted to complete the Standing Committee term. If a member leaves a Standing Committee without fulfilling his/her term, a replacement shall serve an interim appointment by the Senior Pastor and Deacon Officers until the next business meeting.

Committee Officers. Each Standing Committee will have a designated Chairman and Vice-Chairman appointed by the Senior Pastor and Deacon Officers. A Secretary will be selected by the Committee Chairman. The Chairman will be responsible for calling all meetings, moderating and establishing agenda for all meetings, ensuring that all members are informed of meeting time and place and ensuring that the Committee works within the established guidelines of the Church. The Secretary will be responsible for maintaining records of the Committee's actions and for transferring any minutes or other records to the Business office at the end of the Church year.

Ex-officio. The Senior Pastor and/or Pastoral Staff Designate and the Chairman of the Deacons shall be ex-officio members of all Committees and serve as resource persons. Other staff and Church members may be utilized as ex-officio members. All ex-officio members are to refrain from voting.

Section 2. Advisory Teams/Committees

The Senior Pastor, in consultation with the Deacon Chairman, may establish Advisory Teams and Committees as are determined necessary for the business operation of the Church. The Advisory Team/Committees shall be established and only exist as long as the special task and need exist and the Senior Pastor deems it is appropriate.

Article IV. Church Staff

Section 1. Composition

The Church staff shall be composed of the Senior Pastor, Executive Pastor, pastors, and support personnel as may be authorized by the Church to carry out the various Church ministries and support functions.

Section 2. Call of the Senior Pastor and His Duties

The Senior Pastor shall be chosen and called by the Church whenever a vacancy occurs. A Senior Pastor Search Committee will be nominated by the Deacons and elected by the Church for this specific purpose. Details of how this Committee functions and interacts with the Church are included in the Policies and Procedures Manual. General duties of the Senior Pastor are included in the Policies and Procedures Manual.

Section 3. Call and Selection of Other Ministerial Staff and Their Duties

Details of the call and selection procedures are included in the Policies and Procedures Manual.

Article V. Deacons

Section 1. Purpose

Deacons share a common task with the Senior Pastor and ministerial staff in caring for the congregation. They are all partners in performing ministry. The Deacons are servant leaders who work alongside the Pastor and assist him in his shepherding role. This ministry includes:

- A. Proclaiming the gospel to believers and unbelievers
 - 1. Participating in witnessing activities
 - 2. Administering ordinances
- B. Caring for the Church's members and other persons in the community
 - 1. Ministering in times of crises
 - 2. Providing Pastoral counsel and referral
 - 3. Providing spiritual guidance
 - 4. Performing acts of benevolence
- C. Leading the Church in the achievement of its mission
 - 1. Setting a personal example of Christian living
 - 2. Interpreting the work of the Church to Church members and the community
 - 3. Being informed about the life and work of the Church
 - 4. Encouraging cooperative work with other Churches
 - 5. Building and maintaining Church fellowship

Section 2. Composition

Deacons shall be elected by the Church. There shall be a sufficient and representative number continually serving the Church body. The Senior Pastor and Deacon Chairman will determine the actual number needed for service.

Section 3. Role of and Selection Process of Deacons

The role of Deacons, Deacon Officers and the selection process is included in the Policies and Procedures Manual.

Section 4. Expectations and Standards

Deacons must subscribe to and meet the scriptural qualifications outlined in Acts 6:3 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13. In addition, Deacons must meet the following Church standards.

- A. Have been members of Liberty Baptist Church at least one year.
- B. Be concerned for the spiritual welfare of people.
- C. Be concerned for a harmonious relationship between the Deacons, Senior Pastor, and Staff.
- D. Be willing and cheerful givers of their income, recognizing the tithe as the minimum.
- E. Be faithful in attending Deacon meetings and other meetings as may be scheduled for Deacon attendance.
- F. Be alert to building and sustaining the harmony and fellowship of the Church body.
- G. Be active supporters of and participants in the Church programs.

Article VI. Church Meetings

Section 1. Worship Services

The Church shall meet regularly each week for the worship of Almighty God. Prayer, praise, preaching, instruction, and evangelism shall be among the ingredients of these services.

Section 2. Regular Business Meetings

The Church shall hold an Annual Business Meeting each year in November. The purpose of the meeting shall be to adopt an annual budget and to elect Committee members, Church officers, and other leaders requiring membership election. Other agenda items may be added by the Senior Pastor or Deacon Chairman provided that notice of such items is provided in the same manner as it would be provided for a specially called meeting.

Section 3. Special Business Meetings

The Church may conduct called business meetings between regular meetings to consider matters of special nature and significance. These meetings shall be called by the Senior Pastor. In the event of vacancy of the Senior Pastor position or if the meeting concerns the removal of the Senior Pastor, the Deacon Chairman shall call for the meeting. Except in emergency circumstances, a one (1) week notice must be given for the Specially Called Business Meeting. The notice shall include the subject, the date, and time and place; and it must be given in the manner described in *Section 4.* below. In the event this notice needs to be less than one week as determined by the Senior Pastor and Deacon Officers and approved by the Deacons, the Deacons shall then determine the time and place of the emergency meeting, giving as much advanced notice as possible. Only the prescribed subject may be discussed or acted upon at any Special Business Meeting.

Section 4. Notice Requirements

Except as noted above for emergency business meetings, all other meetings require that notice shall be given to members no less than one (1) week prior to a meeting. Notification of all meetings shall be given in one or more of the following manners which shall be deemed to be a reasonable method of calling a Business Meeting:

- A. Distribution of written material to the congregation in attendance at a weekend service.
- B. Oral announcement to the congregation at a weekend service.
- C. Delivery by US mail to each member as identified on the membership roll.
- D. By e-mail, web notification, or social media to the membership. (This can only be done in conjunction with one of the above methods).

Section 5. Quorum

Those members present and voting at a duly noticed and called meeting shall constitute a quorum of the membership for the transaction of business.

Section 6. Parliamentary Rules

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the Church; however, the Holy Bible is the ultimate authority in matters of the functioning of the body of Christ. The Chairman of the Bylaws Committee shall serve as Parliamentarian, or in his absence, someone shall be appointed by the Moderator.

Article VII. Church Financial Policies

Section 1. Records for Finances

Adequate and accurate records for accounting of income and expenses, including contributions, shall be kept by the Business Administrator. A quarterly financial report will be available to the Stewardship Committee.

Section 2. Budget and Audit

The Stewardship Committee shall recommend to the Church for ratification at the Annual Business Meeting an inclusive budget (Ministry Action Plan), indicating by items the amount needed and sought for expenses. The Business Administrator, or its designee, shall arrange for an annual audit by an external auditor.

Section 3. Purchase or Sale of Real Property

Neither officers nor agents of the Church may purchase or sell real property on behalf of the Church, unless authorized by the Members according to these Bylaws.

Borrowing money must be approved by the Members by majority vote.

Section 4. Property Holdings

It is agreed that the securing and maintaining of real property, buildings and equipment of this Church shall be for the ultimate express purpose of providing facilities for the fulfillment of the mission of the Church. These property holdings are also to be utilized in a means consistent with the character and in the spirit of the Constitution.

The Church's facilities were provided through God's benevolence and by the sacrificial generosity of Church members. The Church therefore desires that its facilities be used always to God's glory and facility use will not be permitted to persons or groups holding, advancing, or advocating beliefs, or advancing, advocating, or engaging in practices that conflict with the Church's faith or moral teachings. This restricted facility use is necessary for two important reasons. First, the Church may not in good conscience materially cooperate in activities or beliefs that are contrary to its faith (see 2 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:22). Second, it is very important to the Church that it presents a consistent message to the community, which the Church staff and members conscientiously maintain as part of their witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. To allow facilities to be used by groups or persons who express beliefs or engage in practices contrary to the Church's faith would have a severe negative impact on the message that the Church strives to promote. It could also be a source of confusion to Church members and the community because they may reasonably perceive that by allowing use of our facilities, the Church is in agreement with the beliefs or practices of the persons or groups using church facilities.

If at any time this Church shall determine to alter the doctrinal beliefs and practices so as in important respects to be at variance with the character described in this Constitution and in these Bylaws and the decision is by less than unanimous vote of those present at the regular or called Business Meeting of the Church, it is understood that the rights of the Church property shall inure to that 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.

Article VIII. Church Unity and Multi-Site Ministry

The Church is one body but may worship in multiple services and/or multiple locations. While there are many benefits to multiple services and locations, it also presents the challenge of maintaining the desired unity and singleness of purpose we are called to display as a local Church (see Acts 1:8 (purpose); John 17:20-23; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31; Ephesians 4:1-6).

As a result, all leaders, members and staff understand and agree to the following:

1. That they will strive to maintain unity in the Church body, always putting the needs, goals and vision of the entire Church above the needs, goals or vision of any particular location or service.
2. That the Church will not duplicate governing structures at each site but that all sites will instead be part of a unified governing structure as set forth in these Bylaws.
3. That the ownership of all real estate, buildings, fixtures, equipment, personalty and other items shall reside with the Church as a whole and will not be owned or claimed by any individual site.
4. That the church will operate under a unified budget that all Church members and staff pledge to support.
5. That the leaders, staff and members at the individual sites will support the vision and strategy of the Church as a whole and will not attempt to divide the Church, start a new Church with the members of that site, or otherwise disassociate as a group from the main body.

Article IX. Church Policies and Procedures Manual

The development of a Church Policy and Procedures manual shall be approved by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee or their designees with professional consultation and review. This manual shall include all general Church policies and Committee details. The Executive Pastor shall maintain the manual and the Constitution and Bylaws Committee or their designees shall review the manual at least annually.

These Policies and Procedures shall be available to any members for review upon request to the Executive Pastor or Business Administrator. Any suggested changes shall be recommended to the Constitution and Bylaws Committee. After review, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee shall present the prospective change with their comments for review and approval/disapproval by the Senior Pastor, Executive Pastor, Business Administrator and Deacon Chairman, Deacon Vice Chairman, and Deacon Recording Secretary.

Article X. Settlement of Disputes Within or Against the Church

Disputes in the church may be the result of one member of the body causing offense or sinning against another member in a manner that calls for church discipline. In such cases, as set forth in *Article 1., Section 6.*, the Deacons shall follow the principles set forth in Matthew 18 and the procedures outlined in these Bylaws. The Deacons shall be the sole and final authority as to whether the church discipline process should be implemented.

Other disputes may arise between church members, or between church members and church leaders, or between persons/entities and the Church. When that occurs, the following principles will be applied: (1) Members should treat each other with Christian forgiveness and charity and attempt to work out their differences without resort to the courts, if possible; (2) Certain disputes between Church members, by the nature of the dispute or the persons involved, end up negatively impacting the entire Church body. When, in the judgment of the Deacons, that type of dispute occurs, the members agree to resolve the dispute under the Christian conciliation procedures outlined in this Article; (3) Any disputes against the Church, including claims by employees against the Church or against their supervisors/superiors, will be resolved under the Christian conciliation principles in this Article. Toward that end, all employees of the Church must sign a Christian Dispute Resolution Clause; and (4) Contractors and vendors of the Church will be asked to sign policies or contracts with a Christian Dispute Resolution Clause although it will not be an absolute requirement.

For all instances in which Christian Dispute Resolution is appropriate, as set forth in the preceding paragraph, the parties will follow the Christian Conciliation Rules and Procedures published in *The Peace Maker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict*, (2004). In particular, the parties should first use Christian mediation to attempt to reconcile their differences voluntarily. However, if Christian mediation does not resolve the dispute then legally binding Christian Arbitration shall be employed by the Deacons in accordance with the *Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation* found in *The Peace Maker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict*, (2004). A decision shall be reached after prayerful consideration, in a spirit of humility, with each Arbitrator seeking that which most glorifies God and regarding one another before himself.

The arbitration decisions as set forth above shall be enforced by the courts of this Commonwealth. All parties agree that the prevailing party in the arbitration may present the judgment to a court in this Commonwealth and thereby use the powers of the Courts to enforce the award. However, the judgment of the arbitrators shall not be subject to challenge, appeal or modification by the Courts. In the cases described in the second paragraph of this Article, Christian mediation and arbitration shall be the sole remedy for any controversy or claim and the parties expressly waive their right to file a lawsuit in any civil court for such disputes, except to enforce an arbitration decision. Notwithstanding this provision, to protect the Church and its members and under its risk policy procedures, the Church is required to maintain liability insurance. Therefore, this conflict provision is conditioned upon agreement by the Church's insurers that, in light of the particular facts and circumstances surrounding the disputed matter, this provision, and the process it establishes will not diminish any insurance coverage maintained by the Church.

Article XI. Indemnification

Any person who is sued or who is threatened with a suit or other claim, or a person who is prosecuted or threatened with prosecution, by reason of the fact that he or she is or was a Deacon, Officer, employee, or agent of the Church, may be indemnified by the Church, and the Church may advance his or her related expenses (including legal fees), to the full extent permitted by law. The decision on whether or not to indemnify the person and/or pay for legal expenses shall be made by a majority vote of the Deacons. The Church shall purchase and maintain insurance to indemnify: (a) itself for any obligation which it incurs as a result of the indemnification specified above; and (b) its Staff, Deacons and Officers.

Article XII. Amendments

These Bylaws shall be kept in the Church office and made available for use to any member of the Church. The Chairman of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee shall maintain the official copy of the Bylaws in coordination with the Church staff. Suggested changes to the Bylaws shall be made in writing to the Constitution and Bylaws Committee. After review, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee shall present the prospective changes with their comments for review and a recommendation for either approval or disapproval by the Senior Pastor, Executive Pastor, Business Administrator and Deacon Chairman, Deacon Vice Chairman, and Deacon Recording Secretary. Approval of this group requires four (4) out of the six (6) members voting in favor. If approved, the prospective changes along with the Constitution and Bylaws Committee's comments shall be brought to the Church during a business meeting for distribution and voted on at a business meeting after two (2) weeks but not more than ten (10) weeks later. Amendments to the Bylaws shall be by a majority of the Members present and voting.

I, the undersigned Clerk of Liberty Baptist Church of Hampton, do hereby certify that the above Constitution and Bylaws were adopted on June 10, 2015 by the Members at a duly called meeting and that this Constitution and Bylaws are current and in operation as of that date.



Clerk

June 10, 2015

Date



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