

The Village Baptist Church

**3600 Village Boulevard
West Palm Beach, Florida**

Constitution and Bylaws

June 2007

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PROPOSED CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Northwood Baptist Church
Dbas: The Village Baptist Church

West Palm Beach, Florida

CONSTITUTION

Preamble

For the more certain preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and to the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the accepted tenets of the Baptist denomination, and for the purpose of preserving the Christian liberties of each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body in relation to other churches, we declare and establish this constitution.

Article I. Name

The name of this church, a nonprofit corporation, is “The Northwood Baptist Church of West Palm Beach, Florida, Inc.”, dba “The Village Baptist Church”.

Article II. Mission Statement

Mission Statement for Northwood Baptist Church: To lead people to make Jesus Christ the center of their lives.

Article III. Statement of Basic Beliefs

This body affirms the Holy Bible as the inspired word of God, accepts the authority of the Holy Bible in matters of faith and practice, and subscribes to the doctrinal statements of “The Baptist Faith and Message” adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention on June 14, 2000. (A copy of “The Baptist Faith and Message” is made a part of this Constitution and attached hereto.) We voluntarily band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ committed to leading people to make Jesus Christ the center of their lives.

Article IV. Church Covenant

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

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

We also engage to maintain family and personal devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings and faithful in our engagements; to uphold high standards of Christian morality and oppose all conduct which compromises our Christian faith; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will as soon as possible unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

Article V. Polity and Relationships

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. This body reserves the right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership (See Article I of 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 operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. Each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. 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 of the Palm Lake Baptist Association, the Florida Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention

Attachment: "The Baptist Faith and Message" is attached to the back of this document and made a part hereof.

BYLAWS

Article I. Church Membership

Section 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 self government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church.

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

Section 2. Candidacy

At most public worship services of the church, anyone attending will be invited to present himself (or herself) as a candidate for membership. When a person requests membership in a worship service, he (or she) shall be welcomed and introduced to the congregation as a candidate. If unusual circumstances such as a disability or serious illness prevent a person from presenting himself (or herself) as a candidate in a worship service, membership may be requested in a personal conference with a minister of the church. All candidates for membership shall be interviewed and counseled by a minister of the church or other trained and qualified decision counselor. A person may present himself (or herself) for membership in any of the following ways:

- A. Profession of Faith. By testimony of repentance, a profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and a desire for baptism by immersion.
- B. Promise of Letter. By promise of a letter of recommendation from another Southern Baptist church. If for any reason a letter of recommendation is not obtainable for a candidate presenting himself (or herself) on “promise of letter”, such person will be considered a candidate for membership by “statement” as described in “C” below.
- C. Statement. By the candidate’s statement of a previous profession of faith. If such candidate has not been baptized by immersion since his (or her) profession of faith, he (or she) must be baptized by immersion before becoming a member of this church.

Section 3. Admission

Upon the recommendation of the decision counselor: a letter of recommendation from another church may be requested, a candidate may be baptized, or additional counseling may be provided by a minister of the church.

Every candidate for membership shall be strongly encouraged to participate in a "new members class" for a better understanding of his (or her) commitment as a Christian and member of this church.

Upon receipt of a letter of recommendation from a sister church, the experience of baptism by immersion or statement of previous profession of faith and baptism, the names of candidates for membership shall be presented to the church for approval at a regularly scheduled church business meeting. Should there be any dissent concerning a candidate, the matter shall be referred to the Pastor and Deacons for investigation and a recommendation to the church by the next regular business meeting. Approval by a three-fourths vote of the church members present and voting shall be required to admit such candidates to membership. Upon approval by the church, a candidate becomes a member of the church, and his (or her) name is added to the church roll.

Section 4. Watchcare

Watchcare is a relationship which entitles a person to the fellowship and care of the church, but without the voting and office-holding privileges of membership.

Any person making this area his temporary residence may present himself (or herself) as a candidate to come under the watchcare of the church upon statement of prior conversion experience and baptism in another Baptist church. When a person requests watchcare, he (or she) shall be welcomed, introduced to the congregation, and subsequently counseled by a minister of the church or other trained and qualified decision counselor. Upon recommendation of the decision counselor, such person shall come under the Watchcare of the church.

All candidates for church membership shall be under the Watchcare of the church until all requirements for membership as set forth in "Section 3, Admission" have been met.

Section 5. Rights and Responsibilities

A. Rights.

1. Every church member 18 years of age or older is entitled to vote in all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in business meetings.
2. Every church member 18 years of age or older is eligible for consideration by the membership for elective offices or appointive positions in the church, except that only men who are at least 21 years of age are eligible for election to the office of Deacon.
3. Those under watchcare may hold appointive positions, but are not eligible to vote in church business meetings or hold elective office.
4. Any member has the right to attend a committee or team meeting as a guest to make recommendations after obtaining permission in advance from the chairperson. Discussion of these recommendations in the presence of the guest is at the discretion of the chairperson who may excuse such guests from the meeting at any time.

B. Responsibilities.

Every member is expected to be faithful in his responsibilities as a Christian, to attend the services of the church regularly, to contribute regularly for its support, to participate in its organized work and ministries, and to carry out the spirit of its constitution and bylaws.

Section 6. Membership Records and Classification

A roll of the membership of the church shall be maintained in the church office or by the church clerk. This roll shall contain the names, last known addresses, date and method of admission, and any other information deemed pertinent to the continuing history of membership in this church. Membership in a mission of this church shall constitute membership in this church. The membership roll shall be classified as follows:

- A. Resident Members. Those members who reside within commuting distance of the church.
- B. Nonresident Members. Those who have moved from the church commuting area without transferring their membership from this church or those members whose addresses are unknown shall be classified as nonresident members.
- C. Watchcare. Those under the watchcare of the church as described in “Section 4, Watchcare” above.

Section 7. Termination of Membership

Membership in this church may be terminated in any of the following ways:

- A. Death. The name of a deceased member will be removed from the membership roll of the church.
- B. Transfer of Letter. If a member wishes to join another Southern Baptist church, that church may request a letter of recommendation from Northwood Baptist Church. A request for the letter of a member in good standing will be honored promptly. All other requests will be referred to the deacons for recommended action.
- C. Change of Church Affiliation. A member who joins or becomes affiliated with a church of another denomination will be removed from this church's membership.
- D. Erasure of Nonresident Members. Those who move without a forwarding address will be erased after 6 months. A nonresident member with a known address shall be contacted after one year and annually thereafter to determine if he wishes to retain his membership in this church. A member who does not respond will be removed from this church's membership.
- E. Withdrawal. A person's name will be removed from the church's membership if he (or she) requests removal for any reason.
- F. Exclusion. Should a member become an offense to the church by reason of immoral or unChristian conduct, the church after scriptural efforts (Matthew 18:15-17) have been made to restore such a member to fellowship may terminate his (or her) membership by a majority vote of members voting in a regular church business meeting or a special meeting called to consider this member's exclusion. (See Article VII, Section 4, of these bylaws.)

All names removed from the membership will be reported to the church at the next regular business meeting. All names removed and the reason for removal shall be retained in an appropriate file.

Article II. Church Officers and Staff

Section 1. General

There are but two scriptural officers of this church: Pastor and Deacons (Acts 6:3-6, Acts 20:28, 1 Corinthians 9:14, I Timothy 3:1-15, 1 Peter 5:1-4). Other staff members may be employed and other church officers may be elected as the church determines the need in order to enable the church to achieve its mission and perform its ministries. All who serve as officers of the church shall be members of this church.

Section 2. Pastor

- A. The Pastor shall be an ordained minister meeting the Scriptural qualifications of 1 Timothy 3 and is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. He shall lead the congregation, the church organizations, and the church staff to perform their work and ministries. The Pastor shall be the spiritual leader of the church and the leader of pastoral ministries in the church. His responsibilities include proclaiming the gospel to believers and unbelievers, administering the ordinances of the church, equipping church members for their ministry, and leading the church in the achievement of its mission and in caring for the church's members and other persons in the community.
- B. If the office of Pastor becomes vacant, the church shall fill the office as follows:
 1. A Pastor Search Committee shall be elected by the church as soon as practical to seek out and recommend a new Pastor to the church and an Interim Pastor to serve until a permanent Pastor is called. This committee shall also arrange for pulpit supply as needed during the time the church is without a permanent pastor. The Pastor Search Committee shall consist of seven church members and shall be elected in a special business meeting of the church called by the Chairman of the Deacons for this purpose. The Chairman of the Deacons is responsible for nominating seven people who are qualified, willing, and able to serve on this committee. Church members may make suggestions for the Pastor Search committee in writing to the Chairman of the Deacons for his consideration and shall also have the privilege of making nominations in the called business meeting. If nominations are made in addition to the seven nominated by the Chairman of the Deacons and these additional nominees are willing and able to serve on the committee, church members present and voting in the called business meeting shall elect the committee by written ballot. The Pastor Search Committee shall be made up of the seven nominees receiving the largest number of votes. The Chairman of the Deacons shall schedule the first meeting of the Pastor Search Committee and shall preside over this meeting for the purpose of electing a committee chairperson.

2. The Pastor Search Committee shall not ask the church to consider more than one prospective Pastor at a time, and the church shall not vote on the calling of a Pastor without first having the opportunity to see and hear him in a worship service. When prepared to make a recommendation to the church, the Pastor Search Committee shall give notice to the church of the schedule for considering the call of a Pastor including the date and time when the prospective Pastor will be speaking in worship services; the date, time, and place when church members will have an opportunity to meet the prospective Pastor; and the date and time of a special business meeting to vote on the call of a Pastor. This notice shall be given at least two weeks in advance of any of these scheduled services or meetings by letters to all resident church members, announcements at every regular church service, and by announcements in all church publications. The call of a Pastor will be by written ballot and requires an affirmative vote of three fourths of the church members present and voting. The Pastor thus called shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or the church's request.
- C. A minister may resign from the office of Pastor by giving at least two weeks' notice to the church. The church may terminate a Pastor by a majority vote of the members present and voting in a special business meeting called for that purpose. The vote shall be by written ballot, and the termination shall be immediate if approved by the church. This business meeting will be called by the Chairman of the Deacons only after an affirmative vote for recommending termination by a majority of the active Deacons and Administrative Team meeting jointly and acting as one body. Severance pay for a Pastor terminated by the church shall be at the discretion of the Deacons and Administrative Team.

Section 3. Deacons

The Deacon is one of the two scriptural, ordained officers of the church. In accordance with the practice in the New Testament, Deacons are to be servants of the church. Faithful and responsible Deacons are required to enable the church to fulfill its mission. The Deacons work with the Pastor, staff, teams and committees in meeting the physical and spiritual needs of church members and confer on matters pertaining to the welfare and ministry of the church.

- A. Qualifications. To serve as a Deacon in this church, a man must be a professing Christian at least twenty-one (21) years of age who has been a member of this church for at least one year. He should strive to meet the Scriptural standards of 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:2-6. He must be a tither who gives regularly to the church's general fund to meet budget expenses. He must be a man whose life gives clear evidence of Christ as Lord. He must be faithful in worship and Bible study attendance and be involved in the ministry of the church. He must be in harmony with the church and earnestly desire that God's will be done through this church.

B. Election.

1. Rotation Plan. Deacons are elected to serve three-year terms, but may be elected for a shorter term if it is necessary to fill an un-expired term. At the conclusion of a full three-year term, Deacons rotate off the Active Deacon Body and cannot be elected again for at least one year unless there are not enough qualified men who are able and willing to serve. As a general rule, one-third of the active Deacons rotate off each year. The church will elect one Deacon for approximately every fifteen (15) resident church families.
2. Procedure. Deacons will be elected annually in a special business meeting of the church to replace those men who are rotating off the Active Deacon Body, to add Deacons to the Active Deacon Body as warranted by the church size, or to fill vacancies occurring by death, resignation, or other cause. Written nominations from church members shall be received on a designated Sunday in November. The qualifications and duties of Deacons will be provided to church members at least two weeks in advance of the Sunday for nominations. The Deacon officers will process the nominations and interview the men receiving the largest number of nominations to determine if they meet the qualifications and are willing to assume the responsibilities of a Deacon. When the required number of qualified men have agreed to serve, these nominees are presented to the church for election in the special business meeting for the election of Deacons. Any man elected who has not previously been ordained will be ordained before taking office. Newly elected Deacons take office in January. If the Active Deacon Body determines that it is necessary earlier in the year to fill vacancies occurring during the year for any reason, the Deacon officers will interview other men who received a large number of nominations the previous November and present a nominee (or nominees) for election by the church to fill the un-expired term(s).

C. Duties.

1. Assist the Pastor and church staff in the pastoral ministries of caring for the church's members and outreach to the community.
2. Work with the Pastor, church staff, teams, and committees in developing and maintaining focus on the vision and ministry of the church.
3. Maintain continual, careful, and prayerful surveillance of the entire church program, and make recommendations to the Pastor, church staff, leadership teams, committees, and congregation regarding necessary changes and improvements.

4. Keep church members informed regarding church programs, conditions, and plans.
 5. Participate in regular and special Deacons meetings.
 6. Assist the Pastor in the ordinance of the Lord's Supper.
 7. Nominate members of the Administrative Team for election by the church.
 8. Strive along with the Pastor to maintain an appropriate spiritual atmosphere throughout the church body.
- D. Organization. In January, a Deacon Chairman, Vice-chairman, and Secretary will be elected by the Deacons. A man serving his first year as an active Deacon in this church is not eligible to be elected Chairman. All active Deacons, including those just elected and those rotating off the Active Deacon Body, shall have the right to vote in this election. A majority of the Active Deacon Body shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business in Deacons meetings.
- E. Removal from Office. If a Deacon is unwilling or unable to fulfill his duties as an active Deacon or is involved in conduct which is a bad example to other Christians, a negative witness to the community, or is harmful to the general welfare of the church and Deacons, he is expected to resign. If he does not resign, he will be counseled by the Deacon officers. If reasonable efforts to resolve problems are unsuccessful, he may be removed from office by a majority written ballot vote of all the active Deacons.
- F. Life Deacons. Any man who has served this church for nine (9) or more years as an active Deacon, and who has passed the age of sixty-five (65) years may upon the recommendation of the Deacons be elected a Life Deacon by the church. He will be recognized and honored during a Sunday morning worship service for his long and faithful service. A Life Deacon is not subject to the rotation plan and may serve with full vote as a Deacon of this church as much as his health and strength permits.

Section 4. Church Staff

Staff members in addition to the Pastor may be employed by the church as the need is determined to enable the church to achieve its mission and perform its ministries. All ministerial and church office staff members must be able to give a testimony of their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

- A. Ministerial Staff may include both full-time and part-time ministers called by the church with responsibility for ministries of the church such as music and worship, Christian education, evangelism, missions, and age group ministries. When the need for a ministerial staff position is determined, the Administrative Team in coordination with the Pastor shall seek out and recommend to the church a person to fill the position, or the Administrative Team may nominate a search committee to be elected by the church to seek a person to fill the position. The call of ministerial staff members by the church shall be essentially as set forth for the call of a Pastor in Section 2.B.2 above. When a person accepts a call as a permanent ministerial staff member, he (or she) must present himself (or herself) as a candidate for membership in this church at the earliest opportunity after employment. Ministerial staff members may resign by giving at least two weeks' notice to the church. If termination by the church of a ministerial staff member other than the pastor is necessary, a majority vote of the active Deacons and Administrative Team meeting jointly and acting as one body is required. Severance pay for a terminated ministerial staff member is at the discretion of the Administrative Team.
- B. Nonministerial Staff members may be employed as the church determines the need for their services and may also be either full time or part time. The Administrative Team shall have the authority to employ and to terminate the services of nonministerial staff members. Such employment and termination of services shall be with the recommendation of the supervising staff member.
- C. Personnel Manual. Detailed information concerning church personnel policies, practices, and regulations is provided in the church "Personnel Manual."

Section 5. Church Teams and Committees

Much of the work and ministry of the church is planned, led, and carried out by various teams and committees elected by the church and reporting to the church regularly in business meetings. These teams and committees shall include but shall not be limited to the leadership teams whose duties are described below. Other teams and committees may be authorized by the church as needed.

Standing leadership teams shall normally be composed of five church members with the exception of the Administrative Team which will have seven members. The Chairman of the Deacons shall serve and meet with the Administrative Team as a nonvoting team member. If a member of the Administrative Team is elected Chairman of the Deacons, he must resign from the Administrative Team. The Chairman of the Deacons after consultation with the Pastor may also appoint

a Deacon to serve and meet with any other standing team as a nonvoting team member. Team members are elected to serve three-year terms, but may be elected for a shorter term if it is necessary to fill an un-expired term. At the conclusion of a term of service, an individual cannot be elected to the same team again for at least one year. Some members of each team will rotate off the team each year; for a team of five members, two will rotate off one year, one the next year, and two the third year, etc. The Deacons shall nominate church members for election by the church to serve on the Administrative Team. Potential conflicts of interest must be considered when electing the Administrative Team, because of the sensitive nature of certain financial, personnel, and building maintenance issues. The Administrative Team shall nominate church members for election by the church to serve on other teams and committees.

A majority of any team or committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Each team or committee shall elect a chairperson and shall meet at the call of the chairperson. Each team or committee shall also elect a secretary who shall maintain minutes of all meetings including attendance at each meeting. Copies of the minutes of all leadership team meetings shall be provided to the church office, the Chairman of the Deacons and the Chairperson of the Administrative Team within one week after a team meeting. Teams and committees may form subcommittees in order to more effectively carry out their work. The responsibilities of the six standing leadership teams are described below:

- A. Administrative Team. The Administrative Team works with the Pastor and other church staff members on various administrative matters and assists in coordinating the work of the leadership teams.
1. Manages church finances including development of the annual church budget and provides regular reports to the church. (See Article VI, Church Finances.)
 2. Assists with church staff planning and makes recommendations to the church, establishes the church staff salary structure, assists with evaluation of the performance of staff members, and maintains the church Personnel Manual.
 3. Oversees the management of church buildings, grounds and equipment including church vehicles; assures that necessary maintenance and repairs to church property are performed; recommends improvements to buildings, grounds, and equipment; and maintains policies regarding the use of buildings, grounds, and equipment.
 4. Assists with leadership team development, maintains descriptions of team responsibilities, and nominates members of other teams and committees for election by the church.

B. Education Team. The Education Team works with the Pastor and Minister of Education to provide effective opportunities for Bible study and discipleship training.

1. Assists in the development and improvement of various Bible study opportunities including Sunday morning small group Bible study for all age groups (Sunday Bible Study or Sunday School).
2. Strengthens the discipleship of believers by developing a regular presentation of educational opportunities, short and long term, which meet the needs of the congregation.
3. Provides opportunities for visitors and new members to learn more about the church, its doctrine, and its ministries.
4. Researches new and creative ways to help people study the Scriptures and works to improve teaching methods and facilities for Bible study and other educational opportunities.
5. Develops and enlists teachers and leaders for Bible study and discipleship classes in cooperation with age group directors and presents these leaders to the church for approval after the necessary screening of preschool, children, and youth workers by the Administrative Team.

C. Evangelism Team. The Evangelism Team works with the ministerial staff to encourage participation in evangelistic outreach and mission efforts.

1. Assists in developing effective evangelistic outreach programs and encourages church member participation.
2. Works with the Education Team to develop training to lead church members to be effective witnesses.
3. Increases awareness of world missions by church members of all ages, recommends goals and allocation of funds for special mission offerings, and assists in promoting these offerings.
4. Leads the church in establishing mission churches and partnership mission projects and provides support for these projects.
5. Provides opportunities for church members to participate in short term mission trips and projects.

- D. Fellowship Team. The Fellowship Team assists in establishing an environment in which people feel comfortable and in creating opportunities for fellowship.
1. Enlists and trains friendly, effective greeters for Sunday Bible Study and worship services who assist guests and new members to locate Bible Study rooms and child care areas.
 2. Develops and promotes varied opportunities for the congregation and guests to gather for fellowship, recreation, and relaxation.
 3. Coordinates food service and kitchen activities and assures that the church kitchen area is properly maintained.
- E. Ministry Team. The ministry team works with the church staff to coordinate focus ministries, community service ministries, and prayer ministries.
1. Assists with men's and women's focus ministries and all age group and special needs related ministries including youth ministry, college ministry, singles ministry, senior adult ministry, homebound ministry, and nursing home ministry.
 2. Provides support to church and community service ministries such as the food ministry, the benevolence ministry, and prison ministries and researches new ways to reach the community through ministries within the church or by partnering with other agencies and groups.
 3. Develops prayer ministries such as prayer groups and the prayer chain and encourages the congregation's involvement in prayer.
- F. Worship Team. The Worship Team works with the music and worship staff in coordinating efforts to create an atmosphere that is conducive to worship.
1. Assists in enlisting and developing effective and gifted individuals for ushers, choir, praise team, creative arts team, and praise band.
 2. Assists in evaluation and improvement of worship services.
 3. Assists in enlisting and training individuals to set up and operate audio and visual equipment for worship services and other events; evaluates and recommends equipment improvements.
 4. Provides flowers and other decorative materials to enhance the worship atmosphere including special decorations for holiday seasons and special occasions.
 5. Assists with baptismal services and enlists church members to help with preparations for baptism.

Section 6. Trustees and Church Clerk

- A. Trustees: The Chairman, Vice-chairman, and Secretary of the Deacons shall sign as trustees on behalf of the church all legal documents and papers which are authorized by the church.
- B. Clerk: The church shall annually elect a clerical officer or approve the delegation of clerical responsibilities to a church staff member. The clerk shall be the custodian of all church records including church membership records as described in Article 1, Section 6, of these bylaws. The clerk shall initiate “requests for letters” of candidates for church membership and shall respond to “requests for letters” from other churches. The clerk shall maintain records of the minutes of all church business meetings and copies of all official communications and reports.

Article III. Church Program Organizations

Section 1. General

The church shall establish and maintain organized programs in the general areas of small group Bible study, church member discipleship and training, music education and performance, and missions education to enable the church to achieve its mission and perform its ministries.

Section 2. Control

All program organizations shall be under the control of the church. The Pastor’s leadership shall be recognized in establishing, planning, and maintaining these programs.

Section 3. Resources

The church shall provide the human, physical, and financial resources for the advancement of these programs.

Article IV. Church Ordinances

Section 1. Baptism

This church shall receive for baptism any person who has received Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord.

- A. Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
- B. The Pastor or whomever the church shall authorize, shall administer the ordinance of baptism.
- C. Baptism shall be administered as often as necessary to assure prompt acceptance of waiting candidates into the full fellowship of the church and may be administered during any worship service of the church.
- D. A candidate for baptism who is not baptized within 60 days shall be counseled by the Pastor, another staff member, or Deacon and encouraged to participate as a public symbol of his (or her) faith.

Section 2. The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby believers through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His second coming.

- A. The church shall observe the Lord's Supper at least once each quarter. More frequent observance of the Lord's Supper shall be at the discretion of the Pastor and Deacons.
- B. The Pastor and Deacons shall administer the Lord's Supper.
- C. The Lord's Supper shall be open to all baptized believers.

Article V. Church Meetings

Section 1. Sunday Worship Services

Public worship services shall be held each Sunday. Prayer, praise, preaching, teaching, and evangelism shall be among the ingredients of these services. The Pastor shall direct the services for all church members and for all others who choose to attend.

Section 2. Weekday Meetings

Regular weekday meetings will also be scheduled for prayer, Bible study, Christian education, training, and music education and rehearsals.

Section 3. Business Meetings

- A. Regular Business Meetings. Regular business meetings shall be held at least quarterly at a designated time for the purpose of receiving reports and conducting business of a routine or scheduled nature. Should there be any unusual business or matter of unusual interest to be brought before the church, the same notice shall be given the membership as required below for Special Business Meetings.
- B. Special Business Meetings. The church may conduct special business meetings as required to consider matters of special nature and significance. Notice of all special meetings shall be given to the church membership at least two weeks in advance of the meeting date, unless the Pastor and Deacon Chairman shall agree that extreme urgency renders such notice impractical. The notice of special business meetings shall be given by announcements at every regular church service and by announcements in all church publications and shall include the date, time, and place for the meeting and a statement of purpose for the meeting.

- C. Moderator. All meetings shall be presided over by a moderator who shall normally be the Pastor, an Associate Pastor, or an officer of the Deacons, unless a special moderator is elected by the church.
- D. Quorum. At least 10% of the resident church members must be present at any business meeting to constitute a quorum. This quorum must be made up of members who are at least 18 years of age and eligible to vote on matters of church business. It shall be the responsibility of the meeting moderator and the church clerk to determine whether a quorum is present. A majority vote shall decide all matters except those stated otherwise in these bylaws.
- E. Minutes. The church clerk shall prepare minutes of all business meetings which shall be presented to the church in the next regular business meeting for review, correction if necessary, and adoption by the church.
- F. 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. Church Finances

Section 1. General

Membership in this church involves financial obligation to support the church and its causes with regular, proportionate gifts (Malachi 3:10, Luke 6:38, 1 Corinthians 16:2, 2 Corinthians 9:6-12). The church shall provide offering envelopes to church members and encourage Christian stewardship and regular giving . The Administrative Team and assigned church staff members are responsible to the church for management of the church's finances.

Section 2. Budget.

The Administrative Team, in consultation with the Pastor, Deacons, other church staff members, leaders of various church program organizations, and other church teams and committees, shall prepare and submit to the church for approval in a business meeting prior to the beginning of each fiscal year an inclusive budget, indicating by items the amount needed and sought for all purposes. The adoption of the budget by the church shall be considered authorization for expenditures to the extent of each budgeted item without further approval by the church provided funds are available. Should circumstances reveal a need for a significant increase in any budgeted item, the Administrative Team shall recommend such change to the church for approval. If a serious financial shortfall should occur, the Administrative Team is responsible for recommending spending priorities to the church for approval.

Section 3. Fiscal Year.

The fiscal year of the church shall be determined by the church and need not run concurrently with the operational year, educational year, etc.

Section 4. Accounting Procedures and Controls

The Administrative Team and church financial secretary shall establish and maintain procedures to ensure that all money or other gifts received by the church are promptly counted, properly secured and recorded, and placed in the appropriate bank account or other depository. All tithes, gifts, offerings, and other sources of income not otherwise designated shall be placed in the general fund for church expenses. The Administrative team shall also ensure that procedures are in place for effective control of budget expenditures. Records of expenditures against each budgeted line item and each unbudgeted, designated account shall be maintained by the financial secretary. All checks issued by the church must be signed by two persons. The church financial secretary, the Chairman of the Deacons, and a selected member of the Administrative Team shall be authorized to sign checks. Records of the contributions of each church member shall also be maintained by the financial secretary. All financial records of the church except for the contribution records of individuals shall be open for review by any church member upon request to the Administrative Team.

Section 5. Designated Offerings

Special offerings may be sought by the church or any of its organizations only after approval of the Administrative Team. This does not preclude individuals making special offerings at any time as the Spirit of God leads them. All designated offerings or other revenue collections shall be accounted for separately from general funds and shall be used in accordance with the purpose of the contributor, providing this purpose is consistent with the mission and ministries of the church. Memorial funds are to be used for church debt reduction and/or the implementation of capital improvements to the church.

Section 6. Financial Reports

The financial secretary and Administrative Team shall provide quarterly and annual reports in regular church business meetings stating general fund total receipts and expenditures by major budget item and designated fund receipts and expenditures.

Article VII. Church Discipline

Section 1. General

It is the goal of this church that its members shall be bonded together in Christian love and that every member shall be faithful in his (or her) responsibilities as a Christian and member of this church. When this goal is not met, however, the general church discipline practices to be followed by this church are described below.

Section 2. Discipline of Church Officers and Church Program Organization Leaders

If a church officer (see Article II of these bylaws) or church program leader (such as a Bible Study teacher, children's worker, or member of a choir or praise team) is unwilling or unable for an extended period of time to perform his (or her) duties or is involved in conduct which is a bad example to other Christians, a negative witness to the community, or is harmful to the general welfare of the church, this church officer or leader is expected to resign. If the individual does not resign, he (or she) shall be counseled by the Pastor, another appropriate ministerial staff member, Deacons, the cognizant team or committee chairperson, or another appropriate church member. (If the individual is a woman, counseling by a mature Christian woman may be appropriate.) The individual shall be counseled in a spirit of love and discipline rather than with a desire for punishment. If reasonable efforts to resolve problems in accordance with Matthew 18:15-16 are unsuccessful, the individual may be removed from his office or position of leadership.

Section 3. Differences Between Members

If serious disagreements arise between church members, the members involved shall, in a spirit of Christian kindness, endeavor to effect a reconciliation in the manner taught by Jesus in Matthew 5:23-24 and 18:15-16.

Section 4. Members Who Become an Offense to the Church

Should any member become an offense to the church by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct, the Pastor, Deacons, and other church members shall attempt in a spirit of love to restore the member to the fellowship of the church following the teachings of Jesus in Matthew 18:15-17. In those situations in which the Deacons determine it is appropriate, the Deacons may recommend to the church after a fair hearing that this member be excluded from the membership. (See Article I, Section 7.F, of these Bylaws.)

Article VIII. Amendments**Section 1. Constitution**

This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at any business meeting of the church, provided the proposed amendments have been made available to church members in writing at least two weeks before the meeting, and notice of the meeting has been given when the proposed amendments are provided. Notice of the meeting to consider the amendments must also be given as required for special business meetings in Article V, Section 3.B of these Bylaws.

Section 2. Bylaws

These Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the members present and voting at any business meeting of the church, provided the proposed amendments have been made available to church members in writing at least two weeks before the meeting, and notice of the meeting has been given when the proposed amendments are provided. Notice of the meeting to consider the amendments must also be given as required for special business meetings in Article V, Section 3.B of these Bylaws.