



By-Laws

*Let all things be done decently
and in order.*

1 Corinthians 14:40

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Article 1. Identity

Springboro Baptist Church Inc. (hereinafter referred to as SBC) is a body of Christian believers located at 125 East Mill Street, Springboro, Ohio, being governed as an autonomous Southern Baptist church.

Article 2. Purpose

Springboro Baptist Church exists to make disciples in the context of a local church seeking to model the theology and principles as described in the New Testament. In an effort to accomplish those means, SBC seeks to organize itself in the following manner: staff-led, deacon-served, team-administrated and congregationally-approved when needed.

Article 3. Doctrine

According to 2 Timothy 3:16, the Bible is the inspired word of God. It is our sole source of authority for all teaching, practice, and belief. The church is in agreement with *The Baptist Faith and Message* of the Southern Baptist Convention as adopted in 2000.

Article 4. Membership

We are a membership expectation church. In order for someone to become a candidate for membership at SBC:

- They must profess faith in Christ for their eternal salvation; and,
- They must have been Scripturally baptized (by immersion subsequent to salvation) or desire such baptism; and
- They may request to transfer their membership from another church of like faith by either letter or statement.

Each candidate for membership in this local church will be welcomed in their decision, and in fairness to them and the church, it will be necessary before membership is granted for them to:

- Attend a New Member's Class;
- Sign the Membership Covenant.

The only exceptions to the procedure listed above is in receiving children into membership, or granting membership to someone who cannot attend a class due to health related issues. Upon profession of faith and Scriptural baptism, children under the age of 18 will be considered members, however they will not be allowed to vote in any business meeting or hold an elected position. Once they reach the age of 18 they are expected to attend a Membership Class and sign a Membership Covenant.

All active members 18 years and older, are eligible to participate in, and affirm, church matters brought before the congregation providing that they are physically present for such business.

SBC welcomes and encourages all attendees to participate in the ministries of the church; however, only members are eligible for service in leadership positions as defined by the Pastoral Leadership Team. Those serving in a leadership position serve under the authority of the team leader and pastoral staff.

Membership may end by transfer of the letter, notification of membership in another church, written request, or by death. Members may be removed from membership when no record of participation in ministry has been observed for a period of 12 months. No letter will be granted to a member who is under the corrective discipline of this church nor will membership be extended to those under discipline from a local church apart from counsel and majority approval of the Pastoral Leadership Team and Deacon Ministry Team (see Article 7).

SBC, in its autonomy, will determine criteria for church membership and the process for admission and expulsion of members. Those involved in a lifestyle that will bring reproach upon Christ and the public testimony of the church will not be admitted for membership until the fruit of repentance is evidenced in their life. The church authorizes the Pastoral Leadership Team and Deacon Ministry Team to evaluate and determine these instances on a case-by-case basis. This lifestyle would include but not be limited to, open sexual immorality, cohabitating, same-sex marriage, those engaging in a homosexual or transgendered lifestyle, and other sins of a public nature. Membership will not be available to those whose lifestyle is in conflict with the *Baptist Faith and Message 2000*.

Just as God disciplines those He loves, so too, the church must occasionally discipline members for their good, as well as for the good of the church. The purpose of discipline is the spiritual restoration of the erring member. The SBC Pastoral Leadership Team and Deacon Ministry Team will administer discipline with humility, love and grace, in accordance with Matthew 18:15-17, Galatians 6:1, Titus 1:13, and Titus 3:10. Ample time for repentance must be allowed during this process. If habitual patterns of destructive sinfulness persist, the member may be removed from SBC membership with majority approval from the Pastoral Leadership Team and Deacon Ministry Team. If the member is in a leadership position, the Pastoral Leadership Team may remove them from the position until the disciplinary issue is resolved.

Article 5. Leadership

Pastoral staff and lay leaders must be members of the church, affirming the purposes and doctrinal statement of SBC. All members in leadership positions are under the direction and supervision of the Pastoral Leadership Team, and are expected to strive

to demonstrate the character of Christ through a lifestyle of Biblical integrity, moral character, selfless love, and humility.

Article 6. Professional Staff

The SBC Professional Staff includes the **Pastoral Leadership Team, Director level staff, and support staff**. All staff members serve under the supervision of the Senior Pastor. The Pastoral Leadership Team and Administration Team (see Article 7) will be responsible for the hiring and dismissal of Director level staff and support staff.

The Pastoral Leadership Team is called based upon the needs of the church. Pastors are the God-called, body-appointed, male spiritual leaders of the church and its ministries. They are to shepherd the congregation and lead the church under God's authority according to Ephesians 4:12-13, and 1 Peter 5:2. Pastors will serve for an indefinite period of time. The Senior Pastor will serve according to the job description and conditions agreed upon with the Administration Team, for as long as he is spiritually, physically and morally able to do so. All other pastors will serve according to the job description and conditions agreed upon with the Senior Pastor and Administration Team. The Pastoral Leadership team is responsible for discipline, direction and doctrine.

SBC and its Pastoral Leadership Team will only recognize, participate in, conduct, or allow SBC facilities to be utilized for marriage ceremonies and other functions, which are related to marriages deemed to be scriptural, as specified in Article XVIII of the *Baptist Faith and Message 2000*. This will prohibit the use of SBC facilities for same-sex marriage ceremonies and related functions, and will prohibit SBC Pastoral Leadership Team from conducting or otherwise participating in same sex marriage ceremonies and related functions.

The congregation will affirm the necessity of adding a pastoral staff member through their approval of the budget or at a business meeting to call a candidate for a pastoral position. The Pastoral Leadership Team and Administration Team will appoint a Search Team for all pastoral staff positions. When the Senior Pastor position is vacant, the Administration Team and Deacon Ministry Team will work together to recommend a Search Team, which will be approved by a vote of the congregation; and be responsible to secure provisional leadership during the interim period. The Search Team should number no more than ten people. Their task will be to seek God's direction in finding a qualified candidate to serve as the next Senior Pastor and present him for congregational approval. A 75% majority, of those members in attendance, is required to call a Senior Pastor, as well as any other pastoral staff.

Should a biblical, moral or ethical issue arise directly affecting the leadership of the Senior Pastor, the Deacon Ministry Team is to begin the process of biblical conflict resolution. (Matthew 18:15-17) Any issue must be dealt with in humility and must be free of any gossip or slander.

If habitual patterns of destructive sinfulness persist, the Senior Pastor may be removed from his leadership position by the majority recommendation of the Administration Team and Deacon Ministry Team. The church family must affirm such action by a majority vote. Other members of the Pastoral Leadership Team may be removed with a majority recommendation from the Senior Pastor, Administration Team and Deacon Ministry Team.

Director Level Staff shall include men or women hired to assist the Pastoral Leadership Team in the oversight of SBC programs and ministries, as based on the needs of the church. They will follow the job description provided by the Senior Pastor and the Administration Team.

Support Staff shall include, but not be limited to, administrative assistants, facility management, or other similar positions as needed. This may include both full-time and part-time employees. They will follow the job description provided by the Senior Pastor, and the Administration Team.

Article 7. Ministry Teams

Ministry teams include, but are not limited to the, Deacon Ministry Team, Administration Team, and other teams as appointed for tasks.

Ministries led by pastors (e.g. youth and children) and ministries led by lay leaders are under the supervision and guidance of the Pastoral Leadership Team, and are not included in this article. Team leaders will be responsible for the selection and placement of those serving with various ministries of SBC.

Deacon Ministry Team will work in close association with the Pastoral Leadership Team to help provide spiritual care for the body of Christ.

- They will serve as “counselors” to the Pastoral Leadership Team. As the Pastor and staff seek to set direction for SBC the Deacons will be consulted as there is both strength and safety when a plurality of godly men pray, think, and plan together.
- They may assist the Pastoral Leadership Team in providing care to senior adults, widows, and orphans. Further assistance might be requested in making hospital visits and/or to share in benevolence and special case pastoral ministries.

- They will give direction and involvement in matters of church discipline as stipulated in Articles 4 & 5.

Prospective deacons will be recommended by the Pastoral Leadership Team and Deacon Ministry Team for congregational approval at the annual church business meeting. After being elected, deacons will serve three-year terms. They may serve more than one term, but must allow a lapse of at least one year before serving another term upon approval.

The Administration Team will be responsible for:

- The financial affairs of SBC, including but not limited to the establishment and oversight of the annual budget, annual financial reviews or audits conducted by a reputable accounting firm, and any matters necessary to ensure the financial integrity of SBC;
- The care of all professional staff members. In consultation with the Senior Pastor they will maintain a personnel guide; receive a report of annual performance reviews; and set salary and benefit structures for all professional staff.
- The use and maintenance of all SBC properties and facilities;
- The response and resolution concerning any conduct, which threatens the reputation or integrity of SBC and its ministries.

They will represent the church in legal matters regarding the business affairs of the church. Out of budget expenses, up to 10% of the annual budget, require the approval of the Administration Team. Out of budget expenses greater than 10% of the annual budget require the approval of the church. The Administration Team will consist of a minimum of seven members, with the Team Leader being designated as the Church Treasurer. Candidates for the Administration Team will be recommended by the Pastoral Leadership Team and current Administration Team for approval at the annual church business meeting. After being elected, Administration Team members will serve 3-year terms. They may serve more than one term, but must allow a lapse of at least one year before serving another term upon approval. They may be asked to stay on for limited periods of time during special needs. If an Administration Team member resigns, leaving an unfulfilled term, the Senior Pastor and Administration Team may appoint a replacement for the remainder of the term. Those so appointed will be presented for approval at the next annual business meeting. (see Article 9)

Article 8. Church Ordinances

Baptism and Communion are the two ordinances of the church. Baptism by immersion will be the practiced method of baptism, except in cases of physical disability. The Lord's Supper will be observed on a regular basis as established by the Pastoral

Leadership Team and in accordance with 1 Corinthians 11:27-33. It shall be open to all baptized believers professing a saving faith in Jesus Christ.

Article 9. Church Meetings

The church will meet regularly for worship, prayer, praise, teaching, and fellowship. The Pastoral Leadership Team will be responsible for setting this agenda. SBC will hold an annual business meeting during the final quarter (Oct. – Dec.) to present ministry reports, approve the next year's budget, announce and affirm leadership changes, and any other pertinent issues. Should the need arise; the church may call a business meeting at any time during the year. The church may hold meetings for the purpose of communication, organization, or information to the congregation as needed. All meetings will be announced to the congregation at the regular worship services; as well as through printed and/or electronic communication. Any called business meeting will require an advance notice of at least two weeks.

The following matters will **always** be presented for majority approval at a business meeting:

- Call of a Senior Pastor and all pastoral staff members; (75% majority required)
- Approval of the annual budget;
- Any out of budget expense totaling more than 10% of the annual budget;
- Purchase or disposal of land/buildings;
- Any capital improvement or building expansion requiring financial indebtedness.
- Changes to the Constitution and By-Laws;

All business meetings should be governed by love and respect for one another. The Senior Pastor shall serve as moderator at these meetings and in his absence a member of the Pastoral Leadership Team or Administration Team will be appointed by him to serve in this capacity. In the event the Senior Pastor position is vacant, the Administration Team will choose someone to serve as moderator.

All new business items must first be presented to the Administration Team, Deacon Ministry Team or Pastoral Leadership Team for discussion and evaluation before being brought to the floor of a business meeting. Each team bears the responsibility of discerning which items are deemed in order for consideration.

A quorum consists of those active members who attend the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called.

Article 10. Licensing and Ordaining

SBC may license or ordain any man for ministry upon the majority recommendation of the Pastoral Leadership Team and Deacon Ministry Team.

Article 11. Church Fiscal Year

The church fiscal year will follow the calendar year, beginning January 1st and ending December 31st.

Article 12. Legal Matters

The legal representatives of the church are the Senior Pastor (or designee of his choosing), and the members of the Administration Team. When the position of Senior Pastor is vacant, the Administration Team will select, by 2/3 majority, one staff member or a member at large to fill the Senior Pastor's legal representation until the position is again filled.

Article 13. Policies and Procedures

The church will maintain policy and procedure manuals governing the use of church facilities; weddings; and a personnel guide for all professional staff. Other manuals may be added as the need arises.

Article 14. Amendments

The Constitution and By-Laws may need to be adjusted from time to time to remain current with the growth and development of the church. Changes can be made through the Pastoral Leadership Team and Administration Team with a majority approval from the church. The Constitution and By-Laws should be reviewed at least once every five years for needed updates. This shall take place in years that end in "0" or "5".

Article 15. Dissolution

Upon majority recommendation of the Pastoral Leadership Team, Deacon Ministry Team, and Administration Team and pending a majority vote of the active congregation, all assets will be transferred to the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio.

*The following men, who serve or have served as Deacons at SBC, assisted in the preparation of this 2015 By-Law Proposal: Will Farley, Pete Ford, Tim Ghysels, Kevin Gilbert, Jay Koch, Amos Manning, Ty Phillippi, Ken Price, Jason Ramsey, and Ted Smith.

*With approximately 100 voting members present, this Constitution and By-Laws was unanimously approved in a called business meeting on August 30, 2015.