

Bylaws

Table of Contents

1	<i>Church Bylaws</i>	<i>1</i>
2	Church Membership	2
3	Purpose and Goal of Membership	2
4	Candidacy	2
5	Rights of Membership	3
6	Membership Expectations	4
7	Inactive Membership	4
8	Church Discipline	4
9	Pastors and Staff.....	6
10	Pastors	6
11	Church Staff	7
12	Lay Leadership	10
13	Church Officers	10
14	Ministry Teams	13
15	Select Teams	17
16	Church Business	19
17	Church Governance	19
18	Doctrinal Alignment	19
19	Ordinances	19
20	Worship Gatherings	19
21	Church Programming	20
22	Business Meetings (Church Conferences)	20
23	Orderly Conduct	20
24	Church Finances	20
25	Operation Manual and Policies	21
26	Dissolution	21
27	Amendments	21
28	Appendices	23
29	Summary of Faith	23
30	Rules of Procedure	26
31	Qualifications of a Pastor	28
32	Qualifications of a Servant Leader	30

33 Church Membership

34 Purpose and Goal of Membership

35 Membership within the Church exists to glorify God through unified fellowship, mutual
36 edification, and faithful service in advancing the Gospel. Members are encouraged to live as
37 genuine disciples of Jesus Christ, reflecting His love and truth in their personal and collective
38 witness.

39

40 Candidacy

41 Membership in the universal Church—the Family of God—is granted through faith in the Gospel
42 of Jesus Christ, publicly expressed through baptism.

43 Membership in this local body of believers further requires:

- 44 1. **Baptism** by Immersion: Either previously received as a believer or administered upon
45 joining, in accordance with the historic practice of Baptist churches.
- 46 2. **Agreement**: Agree to cooperate harmoniously with the church's Faith Summary
47 (available in the appendix of this document), seeking unity in faith and practice and
48 refraining from speaking or acting against it.
- 49 3. **Orientation**: Completion of a prospective membership orientation class is strongly
50 recommended to foster informed and engaged participation.

51 Membership may be granted through one of the following methods:

- 52 1. Transfer of Membership: From a church of like faith and order, by letter of transfer.
- 53 2. Statement of Faith: When a letter of transfer cannot be obtained—such as from a
54 dissolved or unlocatable church—upon a credible of faith and baptism from a church of
55 like faith and order.¹
- 56 3. Declaration of Faith: For individuals with no prior church membership or no affiliation
57 with a church of like faith and order. In this case, membership is granted upon meeting
58 the requirements above and, if needed, receiving baptism by immersion.

59 A majority vote of active members present at a regular or special business meeting shall be
60 required to approve any candidate for membership.

61

¹ Like Faith and Order simply refers to a church that substantively operates and believes the same as expressed in these bylaws and our faith summary and statement.

62 **Rights of Membership**

63 Membership in the church includes the following rights:

- 64 1. **Christian Accountability and Leadership:** Members are accountable to one another in
65 their Christian walk. As well as Spiritual guidance by the church's pastors and ministers.
- 66 2. **Leadership Eligibility:** Church leadership is reserved for active members.
- 67 3. **Voting Rights:** Active members, **age 16 or 18** and older, will vote on significant matters,
68 including:
 - 69 ○ Annual operating budget and elected leadership.
 - 70 ○ Indebtedness for real estate purchase or construction.
 - 71 ○ Cumulative indebtedness exceeding 2% of the annual budget for other matters.²
 - 72 ○ A single purchase at or exceeding 5% of the previous fiscal year's undesignated
73 contributions.³
 - 74 ○ Amendments or restatements to the constitution, bylaws, or faith summary or
75 statement.
 - 76 ○ Disposition of substantially all church assets.
 - 77 ○ Merger or dissolution of the church.
 - 78 ○ Removal of a member following church discipline.
 - 79 ○ Confirmation or calling of pastors.
 - 80 ○ Accepting of new members
 - 81 ○ Other extraordinary actions deemed necessary by pastors or Ministry Teams.

82 **Notification:** All items requiring a vote will be communicated to the church at least 14 days in
83 advance.

84 **Voting Method:** All votes are taken in person and are public with the exception of Church
85 Discipline.⁴ Unless otherwise stated votes require a simple majority threshold to pass.

86 **Delegation and Authorization:** The Church delegates authority to the appropriate staff
87 members and/or Ministry Teams to make all other administrative and operational decisions not
88 specifically outlined above.

89

² The Stewardship Team is authorized with advice and consent of the pastor and trustees to enter into small-scale financial agreements on behalf of the church, such as leases for office equipment or service contracts similar in nature to cell phone or internet plans. These agreements may involve modest debt or ongoing financial commitments. While the team has discretion in such matters, the cumulative indebtedness incurred through these agreements should remain reasonable and not place undue burden on the church. The church body should be informed of any such agreements to ensure transparency and accountability.

³ In this case the idea is the expenditure of cash on hand.

⁴ The intent of this policy is twofold: (1) the results of all votes should be publicly disclosed (e.g., 60% in favor, 40% opposed), and (2) voting should ordinarily be conducted publicly, with members expressing their vote by standing, raising a hand, or speaking. However, in cases where it is necessary to confirm membership status, a ballot vote may be used.

90 **Membership Expectations**

91 Church Members are considered Active Members when they regularly meet within their abilities
92 the following expectations unless good cause is given.

- 93 1. Attendance of Worship Gatherings and Small Groups
- 94 2. Volunteer service in some aspect of church life and/or programming
- 95 3. Financial contribution and support
- 96 4. Continued harmonious cooperation of the church's Faith Summary

97

98 **Inactive Membership**

99 Members who neglect participation in at least three of the Membership Expectations for six
100 months without good cause⁵ will be placed on the inactive roll. Inactive members may not vote
101 and are ineligible for leadership roles. Inactive members may be reinstated as active members
102 upon repentance, reaffirmation of commitment to membership expectations and faithful
103 participation.

104

105 **Removal of Membership**

106 Church membership is relinquished and the individual's name removed from the membership
107 roll for any of the following reasons:

- 108 1. Death.
- 109 2. Request for removal by the member.
- 110 3. Transfer of membership to another church.
- 111 4. Failure to uphold Membership Expectations for more than 18 months, following
- 112 admonishment.
- 113 5. Unrepentant sin leading to church discipline.

114

115 **Church Discipline**

- 116 1. **Definition:** Church discipline addresses members who are neglectful of their Christian
117 duties or engage in conduct dishonoring to Jesus Christ and detrimental to the church's
118 welfare. Following the biblical instructions in Matthew 18:15–17, discipline occurs when
119 private admonition fails.

120

⁵ Situations such as the unforeseen major expenses, loss of a job, nursing homes stays, rehab, professional or military service in which the individual is physically incapable of attending.

2. **Steps of Discipline:**

- Private admonition by pastors, ministers or other members.
- Suspension from certain privileges (e.g., the Lord's Supper etc.) for a definite period.
- Removal from leadership or office.
- Removal of Membership, if necessary, provided the member in question is given seven days advance notice and an opportunity to be heard at such meeting prior to the vote.

3. **Restoration:** The church may restore to membership any person previously excluded, upon request of the excluded person, and by two-thirds vote of members present at a regular or special business meeting upon evidence of the excluded person's repentance and reformation

4. **Purpose:** The purposes of church discipline are:

- **Repentance and Growth:** To encourage repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth in the disciplined member (e.g., Proverbs 15:5, Galatians 6:1).
- **Instruction for Others:** To provide a godly example and instruction in righteousness to the congregation (e.g., 1 Timothy 5:20, Titus 1:11).
- **Church Spiritual Health:** To maintain the church's holiness and integrity (e.g., Ephesians 5:27, 1 Corinthians 5:6–7).
- **Witness to Non-Believers:** To uphold the church's testimony before the world (e.g., Matthew 5:16, John 13:35).
- **Glory to God:** To reflect God's holy character (e.g., Deuteronomy 5:11, 1 Peter 2:12).

5. **Mediation:** Members agree to resolve disputes with the church through mediation before pursuing legal action. Mediation will:

- Be conducted by a mutually agreed-upon mediator.
- Follow the Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation (Institute for Christian Conciliation).
- Remain confidential, with outcomes not admissible in legal proceedings.

This process reflects the biblical principle of resolving disputes within the church community (1 Corinthians 6:1–7).

152 **Pastors and Staff**

153 **Pastors**

154 **Qualifications**

- 155 1. Pastors must meet the Qualifications of a Pastor. These qualifications are outlined in the
- 156 appendix to this document.
- 157 2. Each pastor must also be an active, giving, and serving member of the church.
- 158 3. Additional qualifications in the job description.

159 **Responsibilities**

160 Pastors oversee the ministry and resources of the church. Their primary focus is:

- 161 1. Prayer and the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:1–6).
- 162 2. Shepherding the congregation (1 Peter 5:1–4).
- 163 3. Examining and instructing prospective members.
- 164 4. Conducting worship services and overseeing baptism and communion.
- 165 5. Equipping members for ministry and encouraging sound doctrine.
- 166 6. Administering church discipline and promoting global missions.
- 167 7. Ensuring that all who minister the Word align with the church's fundamental convictions.

168 **The Lead Pastor**

- 169 1. The Lead Pastor is recognized as particularly gifted and called to full-time ministry,
- 170 focusing on preaching, teaching, and administration of ordinances.
- 171 2. The Lead Pastor oversees the staff, administration, and ministries of the church.

172 **Lead Pastor Selection**

- 173 1. A selection team of 7–9 members, nominated by the Nominating Team and approved by
- 174 the congregation, will work to identify a candidate after seeking advice and counsel from
- 175 the Texas Baptists.
- 176 2. The new Lead Pastor will be called upon a three-fourths majority vote of the active
- 177 members present at a duly called church conference.
- 178 3. During the interim period, the Trustees will serve as the church's administrative
- 179 authority. The composition of the Trustees will not change until a new Lead Pastor is
- 180 secured.
- 181 4. The Lead Team may secure one or more individuals to cover the preaching
- 182 responsibilities. However, the administrative duties of the church including the
- 183 management of the staff are to be the responsibility of the Trustees

184 **Lead Pastor Dismissal**

- 185 1. The church may vacate the Lead Pastor's position by a majority vote of the Lead Team
186 (excluding the Lead Pastor) and a three-fourths majority vote of active members at a duly
187 called church conference.
- 188 2. Notice of such action must be given at least 14 days in advance during a regular Sunday
189 service, and it must be communicated by a member of the Lead Team. During this 14-day
190 period, the Lead Pastor will be placed on administrative leave.
- 191 3. The Lead Pastor must be informed of any charges and given an opportunity to address the
192 congregation.
- 193 4. The Lead Team may release the Lead Pastor earlier than the notice period, and may
194 provide an appropriate severance not to exceed 60-days of pay and benefits as determined
195 by the Human Resources Team.

196 **Lead Pastor Resignation**

- 197 1. The Lead Pastor may resign at any time, providing at least 14 days' notice.
- 198 2. The Lead Team may release the Lead Pastor earlier than the notice period.

199 **Associate Pastors**

- 200 1. Additional pastors may be called as associates to assist the Lead Pastor.
- 201 2. These roles may include titles such as Executive or Associate Pastor and are tailored to
202 support the Lead Pastor's responsibilities.

203

204 **Church Staff**

205 **Tiers, Hiring and Termination**

206 The church shall operate with three distinct tiers of staff employment, in addition to that of
207 the Lead Pastor. ⁶ Each tier is primarily defined by the nature and scope of responsibility and
208 authority.

209 All personnel decisions must comply with the Human Resources Policy Manual.

⁶ The church recognizes four employment tiers: **Lead Pastor, Tier One, Tier Two, and Tier Three**. These tiers are solely intended to indicate employment levels and should not be interpreted as theological or ecclesiological rankings.

210 **Tier One (Executive)**

211 This tier includes all pastoral staff and any roles with overarching, church-wide authority. This
 212 includes, but is not limited to, the Executive Pastors, Associate Pastors and other senior
 213 executive positions.

214 **Hiring:** Individuals in this tier require the recommendation of the Lead Pastor and must
 215 be approved by a majority vote of both the Human Resources Team and the active
 216 members present at a duly called Church Conference.

217 **Termination:** Termination requires the action of the Lead Pastor and the approval of the
 218 Lead Team. All terminations must follow the procedures outlined in the Human
 219 Resources Policy Manual.

220 **Tier Two (Minister/Administrator)**

221 This tier includes ministers and directors with responsibility over defined areas of ministry or
 222 administration.

223 **Hiring:** Requires the recommendation of the Lead Pastor and a majority vote of the
 224 Human Resources Team. No Church Conference vote is necessary.

225 **Termination:** May be initiated by the Lead Pastor and/or the staff member's immediate
 226 supervisor, following approval of the Human Resources Team. Terminations must adhere
 227 to the Human Resources Policy Manual.

228 **Tier Three (Professional)**

229 This tier includes support staff employed to assist church leadership. In addition to regular staff,
 230 the church may engage contract or temporary personnel such as interns, residents, or ministry
 231 trainees. These individuals serve under the direction of a supervisor with the approval of the
 232 Lead Pastor. Terms of service must align with guidelines set forth in the Human Resources
 233 Policy Manual.

234 **Hiring:** Conducted by the relevant Supervisor with the consent of the Lead Pastor
 235 following the notification of the Human Resources Team.

236 **Termination:** May occur at-will by the Supervisor and Lead Pastor, following the
 237 notification of the Human Resources Team, subject to the Human Resources Policy
 238 Manual.

239 **Qualifications**

- 240 1. All tier one and two staff must meet the Qualification of a Pastor or Servant Leader.
 241 2. Teach and affirm the church's faith summary and statement in all private and public
 242 venues and mediums.

243 3. Other requirements as specified by the specific job description.

244 **Responsibilities**

- 245 1. Staff responsibilities are determined by the pastor(s) or supervisor and detailed in written
246 job descriptions.
- 247 2. Staff must adhere to the Church Human Resources Policy Manual issued by the Human
248 Resources Team.

249 **Duration of Service**

250 All church staff serve indefinitely at the discretion of the pastor(s), subject to the terms and
251 procedures set forth in the Human Resources Policy Manual.

252 **Grounds for Termination**

253 Staff employment may be terminated for any of the following reasons:

- 254 1. Voluntary resignation.
- 255 2. Dismissal due to immorality, misconduct, or failure to perform assigned duties.
- 256 3. Any cause or process specifically outlined in the Human Resources Policy Manual.

257 **Staff Vacancies During a Lead Pastor Vacancy**

258 In the event of a Tier 1 or Tier 2 staff vacancy occurring during a Lead Pastor vacancy, the
259 position may be filled on a temporary or interim basis. The Human Resources Team will
260 determine the appropriate tier designation for the interim or temporary hire.

261 **Lay Leadership**

262 **Church Officers**

263 **Qualifications and Conduct**

264
265 Church officers must:

- 266 1. Be active and faithful members, participating in worship, service, and financial support.
- 267 2. Promote unity and avoid behavior that could be perceived as unethical or divisive.
- 268 3. Meet the biblical qualifications of a Servant Leader, as defined in the appendix of these
- 269 bylaws.

270 **Terms and Rotation**

- 271 1. All officer roles, with the exception of Trustees, are elected to one-year terms.
- 272 Individuals may not serve more than three consecutive terms in the same role.
- 273 2. Officers are nominated annually by the Nominating Team and confirmed by a majority
- 274 vote of the active members present at a duly called Church Conference.
- 275 3. The Trustee body shall consist of five (5) members serving staggered five-year terms.
- 276 One Trustee shall rotate off and be replaced each year.
- 277 4. Trustees are nominated by the Nominating Team and confirmed by a majority vote of the
- 278 active members present at a duly called church conference.

279 **General Governance Rules**

- 280 1. No individual may serve in more than one officer position at the same time.
- 281 2. All Pastors are considered officers of the church by virtue of their calling and position.

282 283 284 **Designated Officers**

285
286 The designation of church officers identifies those authorized to make decisions, execute
287 documents, manage church operations, and represent the church in legal and financial matters.
288 This designation provides clarity, ensures accountability, defines roles and responsibilities, and
289 establishes an orderly chain of command for effective governance and external transactions.

290
291 The following individuals are designated as Church Officers and are entrusted with leadership
292 and administrative responsibilities essential to the ministry and governance of the church, as
293 approved by the congregation:

- 294
- 295 • All pastors
- 296 • Tier 1 and 2 Staff
- 297 • The Clerk
- 298 • The Treasurer

- 299 • The Trustees
- 300 • Deacon Chair

301

302 **Officers Roles**

303 **Trustees**

304 **Role and Authority**

305 The Trustees serve as the legal representatives of the congregation, safeguarding church property
 306 and overseeing legal and financial matters in accordance with applicable laws, the church's
 307 governing documents, and the direction of the congregation.

308 **Responsibilities**

309 Trustees are authorized, as approved by the congregation, to:

- 310 • Buy, sell, lease, or transfer real or personal property.
- 311 • Obtain mortgages or loans.
- 312 • Execute contracts and incur obligations of substantial value.
- 313 • Authorize disbursement of church funds.
- 314 • Monitor the proper handling of church assets.
- 315 • Review church policies to ensure they are current, comprehensive and aligned with the
 316 church's mission.
- 317 • A majority of Trustees' signatures is required for all legal documents.

318 Each year the Trustees shall elect a Chairperson and a Secretary from among their members to
 319 serve one-year terms. The Chairperson convenes and guides meetings and represents the
 320 Trustees as needed, and the Secretary maintains accurate records of Trustee actions. Neither role
 321 may be held for consecutive terms.

322 **Interim Administrative Authority**

323 In the event of a Lead Pastor vacancy, the Trustees shall serve as the church's administrative⁷
 324 authority until a new Lead Pastor is called, in accordance with these bylaws and congregational
 325 policy.

326

⁷ This provision does not diminish the responsibilities or authority of any staff members serving during a Lead Pastor vacancy, but is intended to support them in carrying out functions typically assigned to the Lead Pastor.

327 **Treasurer**

328 **Responsibilities:**

- 329 • Receiving, preserving, and disbursing funds or things of value given to the church.
- 330 • Keeping an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements.
- 331 • Presenting a report of receipts and disbursements to the church at regular intervals.
- 332 • Ensuring periodic audits of financial records by a public accountant.

333 Financial records are the property of the church and will be retained accordingly.

334

335 **Clerk**

336 **Responsibilities:**

- 337 • Keeping a suitable record of all official church actions.
- 338 • Maintaining a register of members, including dates of admission, dismissal, death, or
- 339 erasure, and a record of baptisms.
- 340 • Issuing letters of dismissal as approved by the church.
- 341 • Preserving official communications and reports.
- 342 • Providing required notices for meetings as specified in these bylaws.
- 343 • Preparing the annual church letter to the association.

344 Clerical responsibilities may be delegated to a staff member to assist the elected Clerk.

345 All church records remain the property of the church.

346

347 **Moderator**

348 The Lead Pastor or his designee will serve as Moderator to guide the Church Conferences and
349 business meetings in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.

350 In the absence of a Lead Pastor, the Clerk shall open the Church Conference and oversee the
351 selection of a Moderator to preside.

352 **Ministry Teams**

353 **Definition**

354 For the purposes of church governance and administration, *Ministry Teams* shall be defined as
 355 the standing teams of lay leadership established to assist in guiding and supporting the mission,
 356 ministries, and operations of the church. This designation collectively includes all Ministry
 357 Teams, the Deacon Team, and the Lead Team.

358 **Purpose**

359 Ministry Teams are formed to support the vision, ministry, and operations of the church. These
 360 teams serve as advisory and administrative bodies, enabling lay leaders to partner with the
 361 pastoral staff in fulfilling the church's mission. Each team operates as a representative body of
 362 the church, entrusted with decision-making authority within a clearly defined scope of
 363 responsibility.

364 **Formation and Dissolution**

365 With the exception of the Deacon Team, Ministry Teams shall be established on an as-needed
 366 basis. A Ministry Team may be dissolved when its responsibilities are assumed by church staff
 367 or when its function no longer aligns with the church's mission, priorities, or operational
 368 capacity. The formation and dissolution of Ministry Teams shall be recommended by the Lead
 369 Team with a congregational vote to change these bylaws.

370 **Qualifications**

371 Members of Ministry Teams must:

- 372 1. Be active church members who meet attendance, financial contribution, and length-of-
 373 membership requirements as determined by the Nominating Team.
- 374 2. Meet the biblical Qualifications of a Servant Leader.

375 **Composition**

- 376 1. Ministry Team composition will aim to reflect the church's diversity (gender, race,
 377 generation, etc.)
- 378 2. Each team will consist of six members unless otherwise defined, plus the Lead Pastor or
 379 staff designate.⁸
- 380 3. In addition, one active member between the age of 16-18 may be nominated to serve as a
 381 non-voting member of each Ministry Team. Such non-voting members may be dismissed
 382 by the Chair for matters of sensitivity.
- 383 4. Efforts will be made to ensure that members bring relevant skills and experiences to their
 384 respective teams.
- 385 5. Immediate family members shall not serve concurrently on the same Ministry Team.
- 386 6. Apart from the Lead Team, members may not serve on more than one Ministry Team, be
 387 employed by the church or the immediate family member of any staff member without

⁸ The staff delegate serves to ensure communication and continuity between staff and lay leadership, and is not present to direct, control, or act as an informant for staff.

approval by the Lead Team and a special, majority, vote of active members at a duly called church conference.

7. All Ministry Team members will be nominated by the Nominating Team and elected by a church vote. Nominees for the Nominating Team will be made by the Lead Team and confirmed by church vote.

Terms of Service

1. Ministry Team members will serve three-year terms, with a yearly recommitment, to ensure fresh perspectives and shared leadership opportunities.
2. Members may not serve consecutive terms without at least a one-year hiatus unless otherwise approved by the Lead Team and a special, majority, vote of active members at a duly called church conference.

Leadership and Expectations

1. Each team will annually select a Chairperson and a Secretary for a one-year term.
 - The Chair sets agendas in consultation with pastoral staff and represents the team on the Lead Team.
 - The Secretary maintains accurate minutes, submitting them to the church office and the clerk, for record-keeping and team approval.
 - Neither position may serve consecutive terms.
2. Ministry Team members are expected to:
 - Attend all regular team meetings and respond to team communication in a timely manner.
 - Promote church unity and maintain confidentiality in discussions and decisions.

Specific Teams

Stewardship Team

Purpose: To oversee the judicious management of the church's financial resources, ensuring integrity and accountability.

Responsibilities:

- Initiate and lead the annual budget process by setting preliminary allocations for each ministry/team, collaborating with them to refine amounts, and retaining overall responsibility for budget creation while ministries/teams manage approved funds within established controls.
- Present the annual budget to the congregation for approval.

- 421 • Review monthly expenditures and, in partnership with the Church Administrator⁹,
422 enforce adherence to budgeted spending limits with grace and flexibility while ensuring
423 financial health.
- 424 • Maintain oversight of financial policies and controls.
- 425 • Work with staff on significant non-budgeted expenditures and funding allocations.
- 426 • Ensure regular third-party audits of the church's financial records.

427 **Human Resources Team**

428 **Purpose:** To assist pastors with personnel management and policy development.

429 **Responsibilities:**

- 430 • Advise and consent on staffing, tier assignments, and job descriptions and establish
431 salaries and benefits in coordination with the Stewardship Team.
- 432 • Where needed approve hirings and terminations.
- 433 • Review annual performance evaluations.
- 434 • Oversee personnel policies, ensuring compliance with legal standards.
- 435 • Assist with staff recruitment, celebrations and transitions.

436 **Buildings and Grounds Team**

437 **Purpose:** To ensure the church's physical campus remains safe, functional, and well-maintained.

438 **Responsibilities:**

- 439 • Oversee repairs, maintenance, and campus improvement projects.
- 440 • Monitor facilities budgets and work with staff to prioritize needs.
- 441 • Maintain a biennial property review and report including a personal property inventory.

442 **Nominating Team**

443 **Purpose:** To identify and present qualified candidates for all Officers, Ministry Teams and
444 Deacons.

445 **Responsibilities:**

- 446 • Develop and oversee the process for selecting candidates.
- 447 • Interview and vet all nominees to ensure alignment with church values and qualifications.
- 448 • Strive for a diverse and representative pool of nominees across the whole of the ministry
449 teams and other nominated leadership roles.

450 **Missions Team**

451 **Purpose:** To coordinate the church's local and global mission efforts.

452 **Responsibilities:**

- 453 • Maintain active relationships with supported missionaries and mission organizations.
- 454 • Obtain and review an annual report from each mission partner.
- 455 • Invite mission partner representatives to engage with the church when feasible and
456 economical.

⁹ In the absence of a Church Administrator, the Stewardship Team will carry out this responsibility in cooperation with the Lead Pastor, maintaining the same standards of accountability and alignment with church leadership.

- Visit foreign mission partners on the field, when feasible and economical, and report back to the church.
- Promote missions' awareness within the church.¹⁰
- Administer the distribution of mission funds, including budgeted and designated contributions not otherwise pre-allocated.

Safety Team

Purpose: To protect the church community by implementing security measures against potential physical threats and enforcing policies that ensure the safety of children and vulnerable individuals.

Responsibilities:

- Develop and oversee a church security plan, including emergency response protocols for active threats.
- Train and coordinate a security response team, including collaboration with local law enforcement and first responders.
- Regularly assess and improve the church's physical security, including access control, surveillance, and emergency exits.
- Create and enforce policies that prevent abuse of children and vulnerable individuals by church staff or volunteers, including background checks, screening procedures, and training.
- Ensure all volunteers and staff working with minors complete required safety training and adhere to established child protection policies.
- Oversee compliance with all applicable legal and insurance requirements regarding church safety and child protection.
- Conduct periodic safety drills and evaluations to improve preparedness and response.

Deacon Team

Purpose: To assist pastors in ministering to the congregation's practical needs, particularly the vulnerable.

Composition: Due to the reactive nature and scope of care ministry this team is charged to keep the team will be comprised of no less than 7 but no more than 45 men or women holding an active membership.

Responsibilities:

- Provide care for widows, orphans and fostering families.
- Oversee hospital and benevolence ministries.
- Encourage and strengthen the church staff.
- Support other church projects as requested by the pastors.

¹⁰ In mind is something like - Plan and host an annual missions partnership awareness event, coordinate mission trips and service projects (including at least one local project with ministry staff), and communicate mission opportunities and updates to the congregation.

493	
494	Lead Team
495	Purpose: To provide high-level counsel and administrative oversight in extraordinary
496	circumstances.
497	Composition: Comprises the Chairperson of Ministry and Deacon Teams, all pastors, and a
498	representative of the Trustees. ¹¹
499	Responsibilities:
500	• Advise the Lead Pastor on major projects, and long-term strategy that is not already in the
501	purview of other ministry teams or ministers.
502	• Ensure alignment and resolution across Ministry and Deacon Teams and arbitrate any
503	disagreements.
504	• Nominate candidates to serve on the Nominating Team.
505	• Assist the Trustees in church administration in the absence of a Lead Pastor.
506	
507	Select Teams
508	Purpose
509	Select Teams exist to assist in accomplishing specific events, projects, or tasks that support the
510	ministries and mission of the church. They provide flexibility and mobilize members for defined
511	objectives without establishing permanent or authoritative bodies.
512	Formation
513	Any minister or staff member responsible for a specific ministry area or event may form a Select
514	Team to accomplish a designated purpose. Select Teams are not standing teams and dissolve
515	automatically upon completion of their assigned task or event.
516	Membership
517	All Select Team members must be active members of the church. Team size and composition are
518	determined by the minister or staff member overseeing the project, who may invite participants
519	based on relevant skills, interests, and availability.
520	Authority and Accountability
521	Select Teams do not carry governing or policy-making authority. They operate under the
522	direction and oversight of the minister or staff member who initiated their formation. Each Select
523	Team is accountable to that individual and, by extension, to the church's pastoral leadership.
524	Duration
525	A Select Team's existence is usually temporary, limited to the completion of its assigned task or

¹¹ There is no prohibition against bringing in non-team-members as needed which would allow for key staff.

526 event. No Select Team may continue beyond its defined purpose without reauthorization by the
527 supervising minister or staff member.

528

529 **Temporary Volunteer Appointments**

530 The Lead Pastor may appoint individuals or ad-hoc volunteer teams, comprised of church
531 members, to address specific needs or business functions. These teams should generally include
532 individuals with relevant experience, education, or technical skills, and may provide advisory
533 support, perform designated tasks, or temporarily fulfill vacant staff roles on an interim basis.

534 Appointments are intended for no more than twelve (12) months, unless extended by the Lead
535 Pastor until project completion. The Lead Pastor will notify the church at a regular business
536 conference of each appointment, including the team's purpose and the names of appointed
537 volunteers.

538 **Church Business**

539 **Church Governance**

540 The Church recognizes itself as a Jesus-ruled, Pastor-led, minister¹²-served, and a
541 congregationally accountable body in accordance with New Testament principles.

542

543 **Doctrinal Alignment**

544 All employees and volunteer leadership, including but not limited to ministry teams, teaching
545 roles, worship leadership, group leadership and next generation ministries must affirm and teach
546 the church's faith summary and statement¹³ in all private and public venues and mediums.

547

548 **Ordinances**

549 **Baptism**

- 550 1. Baptism by immersion will be administered to those who have professed faith in Jesus
- 551 Christ as their Lord and Savior.
- 552 2. Baptism will be conducted as part of a regular worship service or other church gathering.
- 553 3. Baptism may be administered by any active member of the church or by an individual
- 554 from a church of like faith and order, with the approval of the pastor.

555 **Lord's Supper**

- 556 1. The church will celebrate the Lord's Supper no fewer than three times each year.
- 557 2. All who have professed faith in Jesus Christ and are in good standing with the church are
- 558 welcome to participate.
- 559 3. The Lord's Supper is reserved for church gatherings under the administration of the
- 560 pastors.

561

562 **Worship Gatherings**

- 563 1. Regular weekly worship gatherings will be held to glorify God, edify believers, and
- 564 proclaim the gospel.

¹² In this sense minister refers to those on staff as well as those that serve in lay capacities such as a ministry team, deacons, etc.

¹³ The Church's Faith Statement is the 1963 Baptist Faith & Message.

2. Gatherings may include prayer, worship through music, biblical teaching, and ordinances as appropriate.

Church Programming

The primary and anchoring programming of the church will consist of worship, evangelism, fellowship, discipleship, ministry and missions.

Business Meetings (Church Conferences)

1. The church will hold at least three Church Conferences annually to update members on financial status, ministry progress, and other significant matters.
2. All active members are encouraged to attend and participate in discussions and voting.
3. Additional Church Conferences may be called to address matters of significant and urgent nature, as determined by the Lead Team. These may include, but are not limited to, the confirmation of Executive or Associate Pastors, or decisions regarding pressing business or financial concerns. Any other requests for agenda items must be submitted to the Lead Team, who will determine their appropriateness and timing for inclusion in the agenda of a subsequent regular Church Conference.

Orderly Conduct

1. Church business meetings will follow the Rules of Procedure as specified in the appendix of these bylaws to ensure clarity and fairness in discussions.
2. The Moderator will guide the meeting, ensuring respectful dialogue and adherence to meeting procedures.

Church Finances

Budget Practices

1. The church will adopt an annual budget, presented by the Stewardship Team and approved by a vote of active members at a duly called church conference.
2. The budget will reflect the church's priorities, including missions, staff, and ministries.

594 **Handling of Funds**

- 595 1. All financial contributions will be counted and recorded by at least two unrelated,
596 approved individuals, in accordance with the church's established financial-control
597 policies.
- 598 2. All expenditures must be authorized and documented according to approved financial
599 policies and standard accounting practices.

600 The Stewardship Team shall maintain financial-handling policies that require multiple
601 individuals, rotating roles, and appropriate internal controls to prevent misuse or the appearance
602 of impropriety.

603 **Fiscal Year**

604 The church's fiscal year will run from January 1 to December 31.

605

606 **Operation Manual and Policies**

- 607 1. Each Ministry Team will collaborate with staff to develop and maintain an operational
608 manual detailing their specific responsibilities and procedures.
- 609 2. These manuals will be reviewed bi-annually by the Trustees to ensure alignment with
610 church policies and objectives.

611

612 **Dissolution**

613 If the church ceases to exist, all remaining assets will be distributed to another Baptist body of
614 Like Faith and Order, in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas and consistent with the
615 church's Faith Summary and Statement.

616

617 **Amendments**

618 **Policies**

619 Policies developed by Ministry Teams or staff may be amended by the
620 corresponding team or employee. Amendments should be promptly submitted
621 to the Trustees for record keeping and alignment check.

622 Bylaws

623 Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the active members
624 present at a duly called church conference. Notice of the proposed amendment,
625 including its exact wording, must be provided in writing at least two weeks in
626 advance.

627 Constitution

628 The Constitution may be amended by two separate votes of the active members
629 present at duly called church conferences. Each vote must pass by a two-thirds
630 majority, with a minimum of 30 days between the votes. Written notice,
631 including the proposed wording, must be given at least two weeks prior to the
632 first vote.

633 Faith Statement

634 The Faith Summary and/or the Statement may be amended by two separate
635 votes of the active members present at duly called church conferences. Each
636 vote must pass by a two-thirds majority, with a one-year gap between the votes.
637 Written notice, including the proposed wording, must be given at least two
638 weeks prior to the first vote.

639 **Appendices**

640 **Summary of Faith**

641
 642 **God**
 643 There is one and only one living and true God. He is infinite in holiness and all other perfections.
 644 He eternally exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—three persons yet one divine essence. To
 645 Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience.

646
 647 *Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; John 1:1–3; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 4:6.*

649 **Jesus Christ**

650 Christ is the eternal Son of God and the Head of the Church. Conceived of the Holy Spirit and
 651 born of the virgin Mary, He perfectly revealed God's will, lived a sinless life, died for our sins,
 652 was raised the third day, ascended into heaven, and will return in power and glory to judge the
 653 world and consummate His Kingdom.

654
 655 *Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 16:16–18; 1 Corinthians 15:3–4; Ephesians 1:22–23; Acts 1:9–11.*

657 **The Holy Scriptures**

658 The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's Word, truth without any
 659 mixture of error. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction, having God for its author, salvation
 660 for its end, and Christ as its ultimate interpreter. It is the supreme standard by which all human
 661 conduct, creeds, and opinions are to be tried.

662
 663 *Psalms 19:7–11; Matthew 5:18; John 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:16–17; 2 Peter 1:20–21.*

665 **Salvation**

666 Salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. It involves regeneration,
 667 justification, sanctification, and glorification. It is offered freely to all who repent of sin and trust
 668 in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

669
 670 *John 3:16; Romans 3:23–24; Ephesians 2:8–9; Titus 3:5; Acts 4:12.*

672 **The Priesthood of Believers**

673 Every believer is a priest before God, having direct access to Him through Jesus Christ. All
 674 believers share as equals in the responsibility to proclaim the gospel, to serve one another, and to
 675 live under the Lordship of Christ.

676
 677 *Exodus 19:6; 1 Peter 2:9; Hebrews 4:14–16; Revelation 1:6.*

678

679 Evangelism and Missions

680 It is the duty and privilege of every believer and every church to endeavor to make disciples of
681 all nations. Because of the love of Christ, we are urgently compelled to proclaim the gospel,
682 bearing witness to His saving grace.

683
684 *Matthew 9:37–38; Matthew 28:18–20; Luke 24:46–47; Acts 1:8; Romans 10:13–15.*

685 Human Life

686 Human life is sacred from conception to natural death. Every person is fearfully and wonderfully
687 made by God in His image and is therefore endowed with dignity and worth that must be
688 respected and protected.

689
690
691 *Genesis 1:26–27; Psalm 139:13–16; Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 12:6–7.*

692 Gender and Humanity

693 God creates each person as male or female, both fully and equally bearing His image. Gender is
694 a good gift of God and is to be received with gratitude and lived according to His design.

695
696
697 *Genesis 1:27; Genesis 2:18–24; Matthew 19:4; Mark 10:6.*

698 Human Dignity and Love

699 Because all people are created by God and redeemed through Christ's sacrifice, every person
700 possesses inestimable worth and must be treated with justice, compassion, and Christlike love.

701
702
703 *Micah 6:8; Matthew 22:37–39; John 13:34–35; Romans 12:10.*

704 Marriage and Family

705 Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment before God. The
706 marriage relationship models the union of Christ and His Church, and within it husbands and
707 wives are called to love and serve one another in faithfulness.

708
709
710 *Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4–6; Ephesians 5:22–33; Hebrews 13:4.*

711 The Ordinances of the Church

712 Christ has given His church two ordinances: baptism and the Lord's Supper.

713 Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water, symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified,
714 buried, and risen Savior.

715
716
717 The Lord's Supper is a memorial of Christ's death and a pledge of His return.

718
719 *Matthew 28:19–20; Acts 2:41; Romans 6:3–5; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26.*

720

721 The Church and Its Autonomy

722 A New Testament church is a local body of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the
723 faith and fellowship of the gospel. Each local church is autonomous and self-governing under the
724 Lordship of Christ, with the right to govern its own affairs and ordain its leaders.

725

726 *Matthew 18:15–20; Acts 6:3–6; Acts 13:1–3; Ephesians 1:22–23.*

727 **Rules of Procedure**

728 **Moderator**

- 729 1. One of the Pastors or a designated church member will preside as Moderator during all
730 Church Conferences.
- 731 2. The Moderator's responsibilities include:
 - 732 ○ Preserving order during discussions and proceedings.
 - 733 ○ Determining active membership for voting purposes.
 - 734 ○ Stating and presenting motions, facilitating discussions, and calling for votes.
 - 735 ○ Casting the deciding vote in the event of a tie.
 - 736 ○ Deciding all procedural questions, subject to a two-thirds majority reversal by the
737 church.
- 738 3. The Moderator may address the matter at hand as a church member with a majority vote
739 of those present.

740 **Presentation of Questions**

741 All questions or issues to be considered by the church must be presented as a motion and
742 seconded before being discussed or voted upon.

743 **Submission of Decisions**

744 All motions related to new business, resolutions, or reports must be submitted in writing at least
745 fourteen (14) days before the scheduled meeting.

746 **Decorum**

- 747 1. Only one member may speak at a time, and preference will be given to the member first
748 recognized by the Moderator.
- 749 2. Discussion will alternate between members speaking in favor of and those opposing the
750 matter under consideration.

751 **Public Address**

- 752 1. Members wishing to speak must first be recognized by the Moderator.
- 753 2. Speakers are encouraged to use any provided amplification resources and must
754 respectfully address the Moderator.

755 **Speaking Limits**

- 756 1. No member may speak more than once on the same subject until all others wishing to
757 speak have been given the opportunity to do so.
- 758 2. Members may speak no more than twice on the same subject without the consent of
759 active members at the conference through a majority vote.

760 **Voting**

761 Method: All votes are taken in person and are public except for Church Discipline. Unless
762 otherwise stated by the bylaw's votes require a simple majority threshold to pass.

763 **Qualifications of a Pastor**

764 A pastor or elder is called to be a spiritual leader who exemplifies Christ-like character, faithfully
765 shepherds the church, and upholds the truth of God's Word.

766 767 **Personal Character**

- 768 • **Above Reproach:** A pastor must live a life of integrity, with no valid accusations against
769 their character.
- 770 • **Faithful to Their Wife:** If married, he should demonstrate devotion and faithfulness in
771 his marriage.
- 772 • **Self-Controlled and Temperate:** He should exhibit discipline, self-mastery, and
773 emotional stability.
- 774 • **Respectable:** His behavior should command respect and reflect Christian maturity.
- 775 • **Hospitable:** Willing to welcome and care for others, showing love to both strangers and
776 the church family.
- 777 • **Not Given to Drunkenness:** He must avoid intoxication and show self-control in all
778 areas of life.
- 779 • **Not Violent but Gentle:** He should demonstrate patience, kindness, and a peaceful
780 demeanor.
- 781 • **Not Quarrelsome:** He should avoid being argumentative or divisive.
- 782 • **Not a Lover of Money:** A pastor should be free from greed and materialism, relying on
783 God for provision.

784 785 **Spiritual Life and Leadership**

- 786 • **Able to Teach:** A pastor must have a solid understanding of Scripture and be able to
787 communicate it effectively.
- 788 • **Loving What Is Good:** He should have a heart for righteousness and a passion for what
789 aligns with God's will.
- 790 • **Upright, Holy, and Disciplined:** His lifestyle should reflect godly character and
791 obedience to the Lord.
- 792 • **Holding Firm to Sound Doctrine:** A pastor must defend the truth of Scripture, refute
793 false teaching, and faithfully shepherd the flock in accordance with God's Word.

794 795 **Family Life**

- 796 • **Manages His Own Household Well:** A pastor should lead his family with care,
797 demonstrating the ability to nurture and guide those in his home.
- 798 • **Children Who Respect Them:** If he has children, the pastor's parenting should inspire
799 respect and godly behavior.

800

801 Maturity and Reputation

- 802 • **Not a Recent Convert:** A pastor must be spiritually mature, with a proven track record
803 of faith and godly living.
- 804 • **Good Reputation with Outsiders:** He should be respected even by those outside the
805 church, avoiding actions that would bring disrepute to the gospel.

806 **Qualifications of a Servant Leader**

807 Personal Character

- 808 • **Dignified:** A servant leader should be worthy of respect, displaying maturity and
809 integrity.
- 810 • **Not Double-Tongued:** They should be honest and sincere, not saying one thing to one
811 person and another to someone else.
- 812 • **Not Addicted to Much Wine:** They should practice self-control and avoid excessive
813 drinking.
- 814 • **Not Greedy for Dishonest Gain:** They must handle finances and responsibilities with
815 honesty and avoid selfish motives.

816 Spiritual Life

- 817 • **Holding the Mystery of the Faith with a Clear Conscience:** A servant leader should
818 have a strong, sincere faith and live in a way that aligns with Biblical teaching.

819 Proven and Tested

- 820 • **Tested First:** Before serving, a servant leader should demonstrate faithfulness and
821 reliability over time.
- 822 • **Blameless:** Their life should not give cause for accusation or scandal.

823 Family Life

- 824 • **Faithful in Marriage:** A deacon must be devoted to their spouse, showing commitment
825 and godly leadership in their marriage.
- 826 • **Managing Children and Household Well:** They should lead their family with care,
827 demonstrating responsibility and the ability to manage their household.

828 Promise of Blessing

- 829 • **Serving Well:** Faithful servant leaders gain good standing within the church and a strong
830 confidence in their faith in Christ.