

Dayton Avenue Baptist Church Constitution

Dayton Avenue Baptist Church (DABC) Constitution Purpose:

This Constitution establishes the principles and precedents by which DABC will be organized and governed. DABC is affiliated with the local association of Baptists, the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio and the Southern Baptist Convention. These affiliations do not assert ecclesiastical authority over DABC in its operation or theological position, nor do members appeal to them for a hearing of church matters. This Constitution is established by congregational covenant; therefore, members agree to abide by the principles and precedents established herein upon accepting membership into DABC. This Constitution follows the biblical model established in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 recognizing the church offices of Pastor and Deacon while confirming there is no biblical office standing between the church and Christ, Who is our Head (1 Peter 5:3-4; Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18).

DABC Constitution Format:

This Constitution is segmented into two main areas, the Articles of Faith and the Bylaws. The Articles of Faith are statements of religious convictions, drawn from the Scriptures, which represent the DABC theological positions and will act as instruments of doctrinal accountability. The Bylaws represent the principles on which the church will be governed (for example, church membership, Deacon body, establishment of teams). This Constitution is intended to be rigid in theological position, but more flexible in meeting future needs of the congregation.

Articles of Faith:

These Articles declare before the world the doctrines we hold precious and essential to the Baptist tradition of faith and practice. DABC intends that these Articles serve as a handbook for believers in our personal study of God's Word, which is part of our individual accountability to God as a kingdom of priests (1 Peter 2:5, 9). We require affirmation of these biblical truths for membership so that we can hold each other accountable to teach them consistently in every aspect of our ministry.

Article I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

Article II. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

A. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11.; 20:1.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

B. God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7.; 110:1.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

Article III. Man

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

Article IV. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace.

Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

Article V. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

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All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but will persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they will be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6, 12, 17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

Article VI. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are Pastors and Deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of Pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

Article VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.

Article VIII. The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

Article IX. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

Article X. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.

Article XI. Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

Article XII. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

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Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.

Article XIII. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

Article XIV. Cooperation

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.

Article XV. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, vice, and all forms of sexual immorality such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexuality, bestiality, pedophilia, incest, pornography or any attempt to change one's sex, or disagreement with one's biological sex. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1 Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

Article XVI. Peace and War

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. The true remedy for war is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace. DABC honors and affirms our military and those in our armed forces who protect and preserve the freedoms on which our nation was founded.

Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9,38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36,38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2

Article XVII. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7, 24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

Article XVIII. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

Bylaws:

Article I. Membership

A. Qualifications.

The membership will consist of scripturally baptized believers in Christ who are in agreement with the Articles of Faith in this Constitution and are striving to live in accordance with our covenant. Membership will be considered on the basis of spiritual qualifications without regard to social standing, financial status, nationality, age, or race.

B. Requirements.

Any person may request membership by presenting himself or herself publicly at a worship service in one of the following ways:

1. For baptism by immersion after profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
2. By transfer of letter from another sister church of like faith.
3. By statement of a prior conversion experience and scriptural baptism, when no letter is obtainable.
4. By Watchcare. These individuals are members of a sister church yet wish to join our church family while they are living short-term in our community (e.g. college students) without discontinuing the membership from their home church. Members under Watchcare may not serve in an elected position of leadership or vote in church business sessions.
5. By restoration to membership after having been removed from the roll of this church by exclusion (Reference Bylaw Article I Section H).
6. In each of the above situations, with the exception of restoration, individuals age 18 and over must participate in and complete the Member Information Class. Individuals under 18 must meet with a Pastor concerning salvation and church membership prior to baptism.

C. Covenant Relationship.

1. Upon completion of Member Information Class, individuals must affirm the DABC Covenant (Reference Bylaw Article II).
2. A copy of the covenant signed by the Pastor (on behalf of the church) and by the new member will be presented to the new member in affirmation of the covenant we have with each other.

D. Rights.

1. All members are equal.
2. All members in full and regular standing, age 18 and over, may act and vote on all business transactions of the church. Voting on legal matters must be in compliance with State and Federal Law.
3. Any member in good standing will have reasonable access to records kept by the Clerk. Records maintained by the Clerk are listed in the Bylaws Article V Section G. 4.

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E. Discipline.

In cases of differences between members or broken fellowship with the church, reconciliation, rather than punishment, will be the objective which governs the attitude of one toward another. It is our purpose to pursue every reasonable means to assist any member. The Pastor(s) and Deacons are available for counsel and guidance.

1. Should any strife arise between members, the aggrieved member should follow, in a tender spirit, the rules of Christ given in Matthew 18:15-20 and Galatians 6:1 in an effort to settle the difficulty.
2. Should a member become an offender to the church and to its good name by reason of immoral or unChristlike conduct, public scandal, or persistent breach of the church Covenant, the Deacons, with the counsel of the Pastor(s), following Matthew 18:15-20 and Galatians 6:1, will attempt to confront the offender; and, if such an effort fails, they will report the case to the church.
3. In such cases the church may withdraw church membership and fellowship by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of those present and voting at a regular business meeting, but only after faithful efforts have been made to bring such member to repentance and reconciliation.

F. Inactive Members.

1. Inactive membership does not apply to members who physically cannot attend due to health issues, military deployment or other reasons and have expressed a desire to maintain membership through contact with a Pastor, Deacon or LifeGroup leader. Inactive membership does apply if a member chooses not to participate in church worship services and/or LifeGroups for a period of six (6) months, showing no desire or intention of returning to the church. Prior to placing a member on the "Inactive List," Pastors, Deacons and/or LifeGroup leaders will make a reasonable attempt to contact the member and determine if the member wants to maintain active membership. If the member cannot be contacted (for example, member does not return messages, has left the area with no forwarding address, or for other reasons), the member will be placed on the "Inactive List" maintained by the Clerk.
2. People whose names are on the "Inactive List" do not count as members on any official membership report and are not entitled to vote in any business meeting.

G. Termination.

Membership may be terminated in the following ways:

1. By letter of transfer to another Baptist church of like faith. When requested by the member, DABC will send the transfer letter to the requested Baptist church. Members may not "hand carry" transfer letters.
2. By deletion from the roll when joining a church of another denomination.
3. By the member's request to be released from his covenant obligation, provided the request is made to the church, and only after the church has patiently sought to secure the member's continued fellowship.
4. By inactive membership (Reference Bylaw Article III Section A. 5).

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5. By death.

6. By exclusion (Reference Bylaw Article I Section E. 3).

H. Restoration.

1. An inactive member may be restored to active membership by a Pastor or Deacon whenever he or she indicates a renewed personal interest to the church. It will be the responsibility of the Deacon/Pastor to contact the Clerk and add the individual back to the DABC membership rolls.
2. Any person whose membership has been terminated by inactivity (Bylaw Article III Section A. 5) may be restored to fellowship by three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of those present and voting at a regular business meeting.
3. Any person whose membership has been terminated by exclusion, upon evidence of repentance and reformation of life, may be restored to fellowship by three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of those present and voting at a regular business meeting.

Article II. Membership Covenant

A. Preamble.

All churches have a unique personality – a combination of the expectations, ethics, and biblical standards upon which its relationships and ministries are built. At Dayton Avenue Baptist Church we seek to love the Lord with our whole heart, mind and soul, to love one another as the family of God should, and to live obediently and faithfully to God's Word. In order to do this effectively, we, like Christ, need to humbly consider the interests of others and defer to them (Phil. 2:3-4). Therefore, we voluntarily covenant together (as have believers throughout the centuries) before God and one another, to live out the Gospel in community and accountability.

B. Covenant.

Having been brought by divine grace to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, having given ourselves up to Him, and having been baptized upon our profession of faith, we do now, relying on His gracious aid, solemnly and joyfully covenant with each other to:

- Stand united for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ
- Work and pray for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace in our church
- Walk in Christian love by praying faithfully for one another, affectionately caring for one another, using our tongues for encouragement and edification, faithfully admonishing sin in love, and demonstrating grace in issues of preference
- Not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, but will faithfully attend corporate worship, participate in a LifeGroup discipleship community, and use our spiritual gifts for the upbuilding of our church and the work of God's kingdom around the world
- Contribute cheerfully and regularly to the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel to all nations

- Willingly pledge to follow the loving leadership of the Pastors of this church in a mutual spirit of humility and teachability
 - Practice personal and family worship, train our children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord, and seek the salvation of the people God brings into our lives
 - Strive to fulfill our calling to lead a holy life as salt and light in this world, deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and abstain from all practices which bring unwarranted harm to our bodies, or which jeopardize our own faith or the faith of others
 - Unite, as soon as possible, with a sister church of like faith if we move from this place
 - And finally, if we fall into a pattern of unrepentant sin, we invite the loving correction of our church family to call us back to Jesus Christ, for the good of our eternal inheritance
- May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen (2 Cor. 13:13-14) —

Article III. Deacons

A. Purpose and Duties.

As special servants of the church, the Deacon's purpose is to serve the Lord by conducting the caring ministry of the church. The Deacons will visit the sick and be alert to the spiritual and physical needs of the congregation while zealously promoting the spirit of unity within the church, thus freeing the Pastor to focus on prayer and the proclamation of the Word.

1. In the spirit of Acts 6, our Deacons will give special attention to the care of certain groups within our church membership, including:
 - a. Widows and permanently shut-in persons.
 - b. People in transitional care situations due to sickness or death in the family, or other temporary conditions that warrant special Deacon care.
 - c. Church members who call into the church requesting special help as needed.

This Deacon caring will be administered in two primary ways. First, the members in the group requiring more long-term Deacon care will be assigned so that each Deacon has a list of regular members to care for. Second, Deacons will be rotated through a schedule of "Deacon of the Week/Month" so that there are always Deacons on call for those members in the transitional and/as-needed groups. Though Deacons will not have to meet monthly to accomplish this care, accountability in the process will need to be provided either through email correspondence or as-needed Deacon meetings (especially in regard to keeping the active church membership roll current, see section 5 below).

2. The biblical qualifications for the office of Deacon place a high emphasis on the Deacon's godly character. Since the Deacons are integrally involved in the lives of people within our church family, they are uniquely positioned to serve as an effective sounding board to the pastoral staff in matters of ministry initiatives and vision. Periodic Deacon retreats with the pastoral staff will be scheduled (quarterly, semi-annually, or as-needed) for this purpose. In addition, the Deacon Chairman or Vice-Chairman will be invited to attend pastoral staff meetings for this same purpose.

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3. Deacons will be responsible to assist the pastoral staff in serving our church family at the Lord's Table. In addition, Deacons are to be models of using their spiritual gifts in service to the church body throughout all of the church's ministries.
4. If situations arise that require church discipline, the Deacons will follow the guidance established in Bylaw Article I Section E for church members and the DABC Personnel Handbook Article IV Section C for church employees.
5. The Deacons will be responsible, by June of each year, to thoroughly review the entire church membership roll and the "Inactive Membership List" (maintained by the Clerk). The review has two purposes. The first purpose is to identify any member on the church membership roll who has become "inactive". The procedures established in Bylaw Article I Section F will be followed. The additional purpose is to recommend to the church those members on the "Inactive Membership List" who should be removed from the membership rolls. The procedures and the selection for removal will be determined by the Deacons and any removal recommendation coordinated with the Senior Pastor.
6. In the event of a long-term absence by the Senior Pastor, it will be the responsibility of the Deacons to see that the pulpit is filled for each service and to call necessary business meetings (Reference Bylaw Article IV Section B). This may include initiating the process of selecting an interim Pastor while a Pastoral Search Committee (Reference Bylaw Article V Section E) is active to fill permanent Senior Pastor vacancies.

B. Qualifications.

Scriptural qualifications for Deacon nominees are the principles set forth in Acts 6:1-4 and I Timothy 3:8-16. Deacons serve Christ's church and promote the spirit of unity within the church. To manifest a spirit of cooperation conducive to Christian fellowship and unity within DABC, Deacons must--without reservation--be able to support the Covenant and Articles of Faith as presented in this Constitution.

C. Officers.

The Deacons will elect a Chairman and Vice-Chairman. The procedures, selection, and duration of these positions will be determined by the Deacons.

The responsibilities of the Chairman include:

1. Organize and conduct meetings of the Deacon body.
2. Serve as a member on the Leadership Team led by the Senior Pastor.
3. Assist the Pastor in serving the Lord's Supper.
4. Assign Deacons for "Deacon of the Week/Month" and other Deacon assignments to facilitate Deacon caring and visitation program.
5. Organize and lead the Deacon Confirmation Committee.

The responsibilities of the Vice Chairman include:

1. Fill in for Chairman in his absence.
2. Assist Chairman as needed.
3. Organize Deacons for the preparation, serving, and cleanup of the Lord's Supper.
4. Assist in making assignments for the Deacon caring and visitation program.

5. Serve as a member of the Deacon Confirmation Committee.

D. Deacon Nomination and Selection

1. The number of new Deacons needed will be determined by the Deacons.
2. Deacon candidates must be male members of DABC for a least one year.
3. Any DABC member can recommend individuals to the Deacon Confirmation Committee, which conducts the Deacon nomination process. A member who wants to recommend someone to the Deacon nomination process should contact the individual prior to submitting his name and ask if he is willing to serve as Deacon. In addition, recommended individuals need to be able to meet the qualifications set forth in section B of this Bylaw.
4. The Deacon Confirmation Committee will consist of the Deacon Chairman and Vice Chairman and three appointees. The appointees will be Deacons (active or inactive) that have been ratified by a quorum majority vote during a regular Deacon meeting.
5. The call for Deacon recommendations will be advertised for two Sundays in the church bulletin. The last date to submit recommendations to the Deacon Confirmation Committee will be published in the advertisement.
6. A Pastor(s) or Deacon Confirmation Committee member(s) will meet with each recommended individual, confirm each is willing to serve, and outline the biblical qualifications and process for becoming an active Deacon. The Deacon questionnaire will be given to the recommended individuals at this time.
7. Recommended individuals may not continue the Deacon confirmation process if the questionnaire is not filled out.
8. The Deacon Confirmation Committee will validate all the information collected and place on the Deacon nomination ballot each individual who meets Deacon qualification requirements and is willing to fulfill Deacon duties and responsibilities. The recommended individuals are now Deacon candidates.
9. The Deacon nomination ballot will be published in the Sunday bulletin prior to the business meeting in which the vote is scheduled to be conducted. The results of the vote will be published in the following Sunday bulletin after the vote.
10. Deacon candidate(s) with the highest number of votes will fill an open Deacon position until all open position(s) are filled.
11. Deacon(s) who have not been previously ordained as Deacons will be presented to the church for ordination.

E. Deacon Service

1. Deacons remain in active status through regular attendance in Deacon meetings, participation in Deacon ministries, and an expressed willingness to continue to serve. The Deacons will determine what is considered excessive absenteeism/non-participation by Deacon members and when a replacement will be needed.
2. There are circumstances when a Deacon feels it is necessary for him to become inactive for a period of time. As long as his inactive service does not exceed two (2) consecutive years, he will be given opportunity to reactivate himself at the appropriate time. The procedures for reactivation will be determined by the Deacons.

3. If a Deacon decides to remain inactive longer than two years, he will need to be re-nominated by the church and selected as outlined in section D above.

Article IV. Pastoral & Support Staff

The Pastoral Staff consists of a Senior Pastor and one or more pastoral staff members, as required by the church. All will be members of the church. Their call, ministry and duties, and their privileges are defined in this section. Support staff consists of any other paid or volunteer church position listed below. All support staff must be church members.

Though all Christians are called to serve the cause of Christ, God calls certain persons to serve the Church as Pastors and other ministers. Only God can call a true minister, and only He can grant the minister the gifts necessary for service. A great promise of Scripture is that God does call ministers, and presents these servants as gifts to the Church. (Eph. 4)

A. The Senior Pastor Position.

1. A Senior Pastor will be chosen and called to the church. Whenever a vacancy or impending vacancy occurs, a Pastoral Search Team will be elected as outlined in Bylaw Article V Section E.
2. As declared by the Scriptures (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9; Hebrews 13:7,17; I Peter 5:1-4), Christ is the Head of His Church and Chief Shepherd of the flock. The Senior Pastor is answerable to the Lord Jesus Christ for his leadership of and ministry to the church. The Senior Pastor does not answer to the Deacons or any other church leaders but to the DABC members as a whole. His duties and privileges are to be exercised under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and he, along with other Pastor staff, is to request the wise counsel of the Deacons in any matter affecting the spirit of unity within the church.
3. The Senior Pastor will be called to his office for an indefinite period of time.
4. The Senior Pastor will be a male minister committed to Southern Baptist theological positions and will be an active representative for DABC in the denominational and associational fellowships in which DABC participates.
5. The Senior Pastor will hold the Holy Bible as the complete, infallible, inerrant Word of God and will preach and teach the entire Bible. He will support all church ministries, be a strong adherent to biblical doctrine, subscribe to the church's Articles of Faith and Covenant, and manifest a spirit of cooperation conducive to Christian fellowship.

B. Senior Pastor Ministry and Duties.

1. The Senior Pastor will be responsible for the general welfare of DABC and will have supervision and oversight over all the spiritual matters of the church.
2. His pastoral responsibilities will be to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to believers and unbelievers; to lead the church in worship, witness, fellowship, unity, and education; and to minister to the church and the community.

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3. He will lead the church to function as a New Testament church and direct the administration of the ordinances as described in the Articles of Faith.
4. He will preside over the reception of new members into fellowship. In his absence, a pastoral staff member or the Chairman of the Deacons will receive and present such persons to the church.
5. He will be responsible for or direct the responsibility of seeing that:
 - a. all candidates for baptism are examined as to their conversion;
 - b. instruction is given to all new members as to their duties and privileges of membership;
 - c. the organization and work of this church and its purposes are communicated.
6. He is encouraged (but not required) to attend the annual Southern Baptist, State, and local associational conventions/meetings. As the Senior Pastor, he is automatically the messenger for and representative of DABC if he attends the conventions.
7. He will have general supervision of all pastoral staff members and support staff (as annotated here and in the DABC employee handbook).
8. He or his designate may attend any committee or team meeting as an advisory member when he feels there is a need for input or clarity.
9. He will perform all other duties, in accordance with Southern Baptist custom and tradition, unless otherwise specifically provided for in this Constitution and DABC Employee Handbook.
10. He will give the congregation (from the pulpit) at least a thirty-day notice before leaving. DABC will give the Senior Pastor a thirty-day notice if his resignation is required.
11. Will call a business meeting when necessary, but at least quarterly.

C. Senior Pastor Privileges.

All Senior Pastor Privileges (e.g. the amount of annual & sick leave, expense reimbursement) are annotated and described in the DABC employee handbook.

D. Senior Pastor Misconduct.

1. The Senior Pastor is subject to disciplinary action when he engages in misconduct that damages the church's reputation. Such disciplinary action could include immediate termination based on the severity and nature of the misconduct. Misconduct would include, but not be limited to, infidelity, immoral acts, criminal acts, or violations of DABC's "zero tolerance" position on sexual harassment. A temporary Investigative Committee will convene to determine the validity of any accusation brought against the Senior Pastor. If the Committee determines the accusation is valid, they will determine if immediate action is warranted. If immediate action is not warranted, they will present a recommendation to the church ranging from ceasing DABC employment to other suitable lesser disciplinary measures. Church confirmation of the Committee's recommendation is required prior to disciplinary implementation. The temporary Investigative Committee membership composition is annotated and described in the Article V Section A.4.
2. The Senior Pastor position (as are all DABC Pastor and employee positions) is considered an at-will employment relationship.

E. Pastoral Staff Members(s).

1. The number of positions and whether the positions are full or part-time depends upon the needs of the church and available budget.
2. All pastoral staff members are an extension of the Senior Pastor's leadership and are under his guidance. These positions are either Associate Pastor or Director of a ministry, depending on the requirement and the position description used to hire the member.
3. When DABC needs to fill an open or newly created pastoral staff position, the announcement will be published in the church bulletin or announced from the pulpit (other external announcement methods may be used in conjunction with this requirement).
4. All pastoral candidates are presented to and confirmed by the church membership prior to hiring. At the discretion of the Senior Pastor, church membership should be given the opportunity to formally present questions to and/or have the individual presented to the church prior to the membership confirming the individual. This is strongly encouraged for all Associate Pastor positions. The Senior Pastor will determine if the church confirmation should occur at a business meeting or service; however, the date of the meeting will be advertised in the Sunday church bulletin for two weeks prior to the confirmation.
5. Each full-time Pastor or Director staff position is for an indefinite period.
6. All pastoral staff position privileges (e.g. the amount of annual & sick leave, expense reimbursement), conditions for termination and pastoral staff discipline are annotated and described in the DABC employee handbook.

Article V. Committees, Teams & Church Officers

Committees and teams are formed in order to conduct church business and ministries effectively and efficiently. Both committees and teams may perform supervisory, administrative, budgetary oversight or other ministry activity for a specific segment of the church's operations or ministry programs. A *committee* is a group whose members are nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the church for a prescribed period of time. A *team* is a group whose members are recruited by the sponsoring pastoral and support staff member for an indefinite period of time. For example, the Music Ministry Team is recruited and led by the Music Pastors to support DABC's music ministry. *Church officers* are individuals or groups who serve as elected legal officers of the church.

A. Committee Organization.

1. Standing committees are permanent committees and may not be removed or added without constitutional revision. The Nominating Committee will give preference to "full staffing" of standing committees before other committees. Each standing committee will have at least one Deacon as a member of the committee. The DABC standing committees are: Missions, Finance, Personnel, Building & Grounds and the Nominating Committee.
2. Elected church leadership in conjunction with the Senior Pastor may establish (or abolish) as many temporary committees as needed to perform designated functions. The Senior

Pastor will decide the total number of committee membership positions required or follow recommendations from the Nominating Committee on this subject.

3. Church leadership may request committee members to leave committee positions if promoting division within the church.
4. The Investigative Committee (to investigate allegations of Senior Pastor misconduct) is a temporary committee that is not staffed by the Nominating committee. This committee will consist of the five standing committees' Deacons, the Deacon Chairman, and the four Personnel Committee members. The Deacon Chairman will serve as the Investigative Committee Chairman, which is why the Deacon Chairman may not also serve as a Chairman on a standing committee.

B. Committee Purposes.

The general purposes of all committees are:

1. To represent the membership of the Church within the specified area of interest.
2. To establish procedures for the effective operation of the Church program within the specified area of interest.
3. To recommend procedures to the Church, Senior Pastor, Deacons or pastoral staff as appropriate. Committees may bring motions to be considered at church business meetings.
4. To monitor performance within the specified area to assure program goals are being met.
5. To coordinate with other organizations of the Church, teams, and other committees where there is or may be overlap.
6. To recommend goals to the Church for inclusion in the overall Church program.

C. Committee Structure.

1. Committee Member Eligibility.

- a. Committee members will be active members of DABC for at least one year before being selected for service on a committee.
- b. Full-term committee members will typically serve for a term of three years. To the extent possible, committees will be structured so one-third of the members complete their terms of service each year. A member who is selected as a replacement for a previously serving committee member will serve the duration of the remaining term of that member.
- c. Committee members will not return to committee service for a period of one year after the completion of their term of service. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the Nominating Committee.
- d. Committee members may serve on only one standing committee at a time. Committee members may, however, serve on teams and/or other temporary committees while serving on a standing committee.
- e. Husbands and wives may not serve as members of the same standing committee.
- f. Persons serving as advisors on committees will not be subject to the rotation rule.

2. Committee Member Selection.

- a. The Nominating Committee will select new committee members annually to replace those whose terms expire in the following year. The Nominating Committee will also nominate, as needed, replacement members for those unable to complete their full term of service. Committees are encouraged to inform the Nominating Committee of member resignations that may occur during the year. The congregation and members of the DABC pastoral staff can be used as resources for the recommendation of potential committee members.
- b. Each potential committee member will be contacted prior to nomination to determine his or her willingness and ability to serve.
- c. The roster of committee nominees will be presented to the church for approval. Confirmation of the roster of committee nominees will be conducted during a church business meeting or service depending on the discretion of the Senior Pastor. The roster confirmation process will be advertised in the Sunday church bulletin for two weeks prior to the vote on the roster. The vote will be an "up or down" whole roster simple majority vote.
- d. The Senior Pastor is considered an advisor on all committees, with voice but without vote, and is expected to attend committee meetings only as needed.
- e. Unless otherwise noted in the committee description, it is the desire of DABC to maintain equal male/female representation on all committees. If available volunteers will not allow equal representation, committee positions will be filled with the available volunteers regardless of gender.

3. Fulfillment of Responsibilities.

- a. If a committee member determines that he or she is unable or unwilling to fulfill their responsibilities as an active committee member, the member may request to be relieved of committee responsibilities and be replaced by the Nominating Committee.
- b. A committee member who misses three consecutive meetings without good reason (as determined by the committee chair) will be considered to have resigned from the committee and may be replaced.

4. Committee Meetings.

- a. Each committee is to meet as often as necessary (but at least quarterly) to fulfill its responsibilities.
- b. A majority of the voting members will constitute a quorum.
- c. Committee decisions are validated by majority vote with at least a quorum of members voting. Action may also be taken by email, and will be effective upon a quorum affirmative vote.

5. Committee Advisors.

Committee chairpersons can request other persons to attend committee meetings in an advisory role. Persons requested in this capacity do not have a vote on the committee but can provide insight or advice on subjects for the committee to consider prior to a vote.

D. Standing Committees, Purpose, and Structure.

1. Missions Committee.

- a. Promote missions (local, associational, state, North American and international) in the church through prayer support, activities, publicity, information, and the seasonal special offerings.
- b. Develop guidelines to determine which mission trips (for example short term/long term, individuals, or teams) to support and the level of support to be provided. Present these guidelines to the church for approval.
- c. If budget limitations preclude full support to missions (if giving does not match planned budget levels), make recommendations to the church on how to reduce support for deployed and future mission team support.
- d. Submit annual budget requests for supported missions.
- e. Research trends in missions and educate the church about the possibilities.
- f. Serve as a resource team and liaison between the church and deployed missionary teams.
- g. Recommend special speakers or other mission emphasis programs and messages to the church. These activities will be in consultation with the Pastor and staff.
- h. The Missions Committee will consist of five members with one member being a Deacon.

2. Finance Committee.

- a. Coordinate the submission of annual budget proposals by individual programs and ministries. Use these submissions to compile an itemized budget for approval by the church.
- b. Review and approve the Treasurer's cumulative monthly financial reports.
- c. Coordinate fiscal activities with church staff, committees, and programs.
- d. Recommend appropriate fiscal procedures for the church. Create and maintain a DABC Financial Procedures Handbook to record all approved fiscal procedures.
- e. Oversee the process for financial audits.
- f. Provide input on non-budgeted items and make recommendations concerning these issues to the church.
- g. Be composed of six members, to include the Treasurer, Finance Secretary, one Trustee, and one Deacon.

3. Personnel Committee.

- a. Assist church leaders when the need for additional church staff positions are required and when there are staff vacancies.
- b. Recruit, interview, and recommend to the church candidates to fill open positions.
- c. Develop new and/or recommend changes to employment procedures. Present these recommendations to the church. Update the DABC Employee Handbook with approved procedure changes.
- d. Develop and recommend salaries and benefits for employees in all classifications (part-time, full-time, salaried or hourly).

- e. Prepare and update ministry position descriptions for all employed personnel or newly created positions as necessary.
- f. Consult annually with the Finance Committee in budgeting for current and future employee salary schedule and benefit provisions.
- g. Assist employees and staff members with feedback processes to promote ministry (job) performance improvements as requested.
- h. Be composed of five members to include one Deacon.

4. Building & Grounds Committee

- a. Oversee the safekeeping, protection, maintenance, and repair of church facilities, furnishing, and attached equipment such as heating, cooling, lightings and storage. Oversee transportation equipment as needed.
- b. In consultation with the Finance Committee, make recommendations at business meetings to provide for the regular maintenance of all facilities, furnishings, grounds, and any anticipated capital improvements. All recommendations should include contracting approach and any additional information needed to ensure a complete proposal/recommendation.
- c. Take actions in emergency situations regarding church facilities, furnishings, and grounds.
- d. Serve as a resource when the church considers securing additional or selling current property and furnishings.
- e. Conduct inventory, inspection, and evaluation of all church property and equipment as needed.
- f. Assist and support the church custodial personnel in matters related to the building and grounds.
- g. Be composed of not more than seven members to include one Deacon.

5. Nominating Committee

- a. Identify, select, and nominate chairpersons of standing committees and Church Officers (all with Senior Pastor coordination) before they are presented for church approval. For open chairperson positions, first consideration should be offered to current committee members to fill the open positions.
- b. Identify, screen, and nominate members for all other committees. Nominees are then elected by the church.
- c. Devise methods of discovering potential leaders and the gifts/abilities of church members.
- d. Coordinate the filling of committee vacancies and chairperson positions as they occur during the church year.
- e. Be composed of five members to include one Deacon.

E. Pastoral Search Committee.

1. Pastoral Search Committee is formed when the Senior Pastor position becomes vacant for any reason and the vacancy is not temporary.

2. The committee will consist of nine members who will be nominated and elected by the congregation. The final committee should represent a broad spectrum of the DABC membership by both gender and age who are actively serving and capable of making discerning choices due to the importance of this task. At least one of the nine committee positions will be filled by an actively serving Deacon.
3. The Deacons will oversee the compilation of the paper ballot to elect the committee members and determine the details of how the vote will be conducted.
4. The committee will self-appoint the chairperson position.
5. The committee will research and receive counsel in order to create a process by which it will seek out and qualify candidates, present a candidate (one at a time) to the church body, and oversee the mechanics of congregational affirmation of the candidate. It is recommended that the process itself be affirmed by the congregation *prior* to working with any candidates.
6. The committee will be in effect until a candidate who has been affirmed by majority congregational vote has accepted the call. The committee is responsible for conducting the written ballot vote for the Senior Pastor candidate and determining the details of how the vote will be conducted.

F. Teams.

1. Teams are different from committees as members are recruited by the sponsoring pastoral and support staff members. Team members may serve for an indefinite period of time.
2. The size, composition, purpose, functionality, and amount of budget requested to support the team are determined by the sponsoring staff member.
3. All teams will be coordinated with and approved by the Senior Pastor prior to implementation.
4. Life Group leadership positions are considered team positions and these positions will be filled by the Life Group Pastor with individuals recruited from the church membership.

G. Church Officers.

Church Officers are bound to confidentiality and will not discuss any observations or information regarding their elected activities.

1. Trustees.

- a. Act as legal agents or representatives signing all legal documents involving the purchase, sale, mortgaging, and rental of church property acting only upon direction by the church.
- b. Maintain inventory of all legal documents, in conjunction with the Clerk.
- c. Hold legal title to all church property (as required by state law) and act only as directed by the church in regular or special business meetings.
- d. In coordination with church leadership, make recommendations to the church concerning legal documents, property, and other legal issues.
- e. There will be three members who hold the position of Trustee.

2. Treasurer.

- a. Maintain adequate records of all church funds received and disbursed, reconciling bank statements and correcting ledgers as needed.
- b. Assemble financial reports to communicate cumulative fiscal position to Staff and church members attending business meetings (in coordination with the Finance Committee). Primary emphasis will be to convey financial position with recommendations to increase/decrease expenditures based on giving.
- c. In coordination with the Finance Committee and in accordance with federal law, recommend procedures to church leadership and committees for receiving, accounting, disbursing, and reporting church monies.
- d. Supervise or assist in the oversight of an accounting system that provides adequate internal controls to protect all funds and financial workers.
- e. Additional Treasurer duties and responsibilities are detailed in the DABC Financial Procedures Handbook.

3. Financial Secretary.

- a. Keep an accurate and confidential account of all contributions where the donor has provided identifiable means. Record the amount of each gift to the donor's individual or family record. Retention of hard copy and electronic giving records will be in accordance with federal law and destroyed by proper means after the required retention period has expired.
- b. Prepare and distribute annually the reports of individual or family contributions. Individual and/or family contributions are confidential and the giving records are only available to the Financial Secretary.
- c. Ensure that donations for uses other than general giving are recorded in the proper fund (general, restricted or church approved project) and are in accordance with IRS regulations for donations to charitable organizations.
- d. Additional Financial Secretary duties and responsibilities are detailed in the DABC Financial Procedures Handbook.

4. Clerk and Assistant.

- a. Maintain the Membership Roll and the Inactive Membership List and update both following the procedures established in Bylaw Article III Section A. 5.
- b. Maintain an inventory of all legal documents to include all forms requiring signature from a Trustee.
- c. Generate and maintain minutes from all business meetings, baptismal certificates and intake information from new church members.
- d. Coordinate with the Secretary on any information requests from other churches. This activity should primarily be related to DABC membership status requests (for example, transfer of letter needs). All other information requests should be coordinated with the Senior Pastor prior to release.

- e. There will be one Clerk position and up to two assistants. The number of assistant positions filled (up to two) will depend on the needs of the Church.

Article VI. Amendments

This Constitution, Articles of Faith and Bylaws may be amended in a business meeting of the church. The process to bring an amendment is as follows:

A. Procedure.

1. Any current (not inactive) member wishing to propose an amendment to the Constitution, Articles of Faith, or Bylaws must present the proposed amendment in writing to any serving Deacon. Verbal requests are not accepted.
2. Requested amendments will be reviewed at the next Deacon meeting. The purpose of the review is to bring awareness to any issue that could be resolved by a change in church procedure, establishment of new procedures, or to bring to attention an issue that has not be adequately addressed.
3. If affirmed, the Deacon Chairman will request the Nominating Committee create a temporary Constitution Committee to review approved amendments. Any disapproved amendment will be returned to the member with a written explanation of why the amendment request was not approved.
4. The Constitution Committee's purpose will be to review the amendment to determine where the amendment should be added, if the amendment should be reworded or formatted differently to match consistency within the Constitution (and to ensure no conflict between the amendment and other wording in the Constitution). All changes will be coordinated with submitting church member.
5. Any proposed amendment will be made available in written form to the church membership.
6. The Constitution Committee will present the amendment at a business meeting for discussion.

B. Notice and Voting.

1. A Bylaw amendment will be announced three times in different venues: at a business meeting prior to the vote, in writing to the church membership, and spoken notice to those in attendance for two Sundays immediately preceding the vote.
2. An Article of Faith amendment has an additional requirement to be considered for three months prior to the vote. The proposed Article of Faith amendment will be available in writing for congregational review during the three months. In addition, the vote for these amendments will occur only during a Sunday evening business meeting called for this purpose.
3. Passage of any amendment requires an affirmative vote by 2/3 of the church members present and voting.

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C. Effect.

The amendment, when adopted by the church and codified within the Constitution, will replace any related areas to the purpose of the amendment.

D. One-time Exception to Article VI. Amendments.

One year from the date the new Constitution is adopted, the Constitution Committee will be reconvened to address any concerns that surfaced during the year regarding the changes made to the Constitution. The procedures for any new or corrected amendments will be that all changes will be submitted to the Deacon team prior to presentation to the church for voting. All corrections will be worked together as a package and presented to the church as a package and not as individual corrections, additions, or deletions.