

*Constitution  
and Bylaws*

BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH  
Fort Deposit, Alabama

BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH

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BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS  
of the  
BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH  
FORT DEPOSIT, ALABAMA

ADOPTED: July 7, 1991

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

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

ARTICLE I. NAME

This body shall be known as Bethel Baptist Church located at Fort Deposit, in Lowndes County, Alabama.

ARTICLE II. OBJECTIVES

To be a body of baptized believers empowered by the Holy Spirit working together to share Christ with as many people as possible in our church, community, and throughout the world.

To be a worshipping fellowship, experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing His person, and responding in obedience to His leadership.

To experience an increasingly meaningful fellowship with God and fellow believers.

To help people experience a growing knowledge of God and man.

To be a church whose purpose is to be Christlike in our daily living by emphasizing commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the Lordship of Christ.

ARTICLE III. STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Holy Bible is the inspired word of God and shall be our sole and sufficient authority in all matters of faith and practice. The church subscribes in general to the doctrinal statement of the "Baptist Faith and Message" as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963.

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ARTICLE IV. ORDINANCES

The ordinances of the church are Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

ARTICLE V. CHURCH COVENANT

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

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

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to use our influence to combat the abuse of drugs and the spread of pornography; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Saviour.

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

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

ARTICLE VI. POLITY AND RELATIONSHIPS

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Southern Baptist Churches. Insofar as it is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the Montgomery Baptist Association, the Alabama Baptist State Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention.

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BYLAWS

ARTICLE I. MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1 - GENERAL

A. This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the leadership of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right to self government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church. The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

B. The exclusiveness indicated above is in no way intended to impede or prevent anyone from hearing the proclamation of the gospel. To this end, we will seat any who present themselves in an orderly manner to attend our worship services.

SECTION 2 - CANDIDACY

A. Any person or persons may offer themselves as candidates for membership in this church. When candidates present themselves, the Pastor or other designated representative of the church shall present them to the congregation. Such presentation shall state the decision made in each case (i.e. profession of faith, moving letter, rededication, etc.) and ask that the congregation publicly commend the candidates for the decision made.

B. Candidates for membership in this church shall be received in the following ways:

1. By profession of faith and baptism according to the policies of this church.
2. By promise of letter from another Baptist Church of like faith and order.
3. By statement, meaning restoration upon statement of prior conversion experience followed by baptism in a Baptist Church of like faith and order.
4. By testimony of believers baptism, having been immersed as a believer by a Christian evangelical church.

SECTION 3 - NEW MEMBERS ORIENTATION

New church members will be expected to participate in the church's new member orientation plan, when such plan is available.

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SECTION 4 - VOTING RIGHTS OF MEMBERS

Every member of the church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference, provided the member is present, except as otherwise provided herein.

SECTION 5 - TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership may be terminated in the following ways:

- A. Death,
- B. Transfer of letter,
- C. Exclusion by action of this church,
- D. Upon being notified in writing that a member has joined another denomination,  
or
- E. Resignation.

SECTION 6 - DISCIPLINE

A. It shall be the basic purpose of the Bethel Baptist Church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The Pastor, other members of the church staff, and deacons are available for counsel and guidance. Compassion and reconciliation should govern the attitude of any member toward another.

B. Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, every reasonable measure will be taken by the Pastor and by the deacons to resolve the problem. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance. But, finding that the welfare of the church will best be served by the exclusion of the member, the Deacons shall recommend such exclusion to the church, and the church may take this action by a three-fourths vote of the members present at a meeting called for this purpose.

C. Any person whose membership has been terminated by such exclusion may, upon his or her request and upon evidence of repentance and reformation, be restored to membership by a three-fourths vote of the members present at a meeting called for this purpose.

**ARTICLE II. CHURCH OFFICERS**

All church officers must be members of the church. The officers of this church shall be as follows:



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SECTION 1 - Pastor

A. Duties:

1. The Pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. The Pastor will lead the congregation, the organization, and the church staff to perform their tasks. All staff members shall function under the supervision of the Pastor.

2. The Pastor is leader of the pastoral ministries in this church. As such he works with the deacons and church staff to: (1) Lead the church in performing its tasks; (2) Lead the church to engage in a fellowship of worship, witness, education, ministry, and application; (3) Proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers; and (4) Care for the church's members and other persons in the community.

B. Filling Pastoral vacancy:

1. A Pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. His election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's notice has been given.

2. The Pulpit & Worship Committee's recommendation will constitute a nomination. The Committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one name at a time. Election shall be by secret ballot, an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present being necessary for a choice. The Pastor, thus elected, shall serve for an indefinite period of time; and shall so serve until the relationship is terminated by mutual agreement or by thirty days notice given by either party. The church may not so terminate the Pastor without a three-fourths vote of the members present and voting at a meeting called for the purpose of considering such action.

SECTION 2 - DEACONS

A. Duties:

1. In keeping with the meaning of the word and practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. The task of deacons is to serve with the Pastor and staff in performing pastoral ministries: proclaim the gospel to believers and nonbelievers, care for church members and other persons in the community and lead the church to engage in a fellowship of worship, education, ministry and application.

2. During the period of any pulpit vacancy, the chairman of deacons, or his designated representative, shall serve as Pastor ex officio in regard to all pastoral supervisory and administrative duties, also, during periods of any prolonged

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absences or incapacity of the Pastor, the chairman of deacons shall serve as Pastor ex officio as heretofore set forth, when deemed necessary and appropriate by the deacons.

**B. Qualifications.** Deacons shall be men who meet the spiritual qualifications found in Acts 6:3-8 and in I Timothy 3:8-13, and shall also be:

1. One who has been a Christian and church member for at least 5 years including 3 years at Bethel Baptist next preceding nomination, and at least 25 years of age.
2. One who attends faithfully all worship services and participates in various activities unless providentially hindered, including, but not limited to, enrollment in Sunday School and/or Discipleship Training during the three years next preceding nomination, with an attendance record of at least 65%. [Amended 8/7/91]
3. One who is a tither through this church.
4. One who restrains from destructive criticism, willing to settle all difficulties in a quiet and Christian manner.
5. One who will attend all regular and called meetings of deacons unless providentially hindered, and when unable to attend will notify another deacon.
6. One who will agree to resign the office if disqualified by reason of any one of the items above.

**C. Classifications.** There shall be three classifications of deacons, namely: active deacon, deacon emeritus, and inactive deacon.

1. **Active Deacon:** Any deacon properly installed according to these bylaws who has not become an inactive deacon, as defined herein, nor been elected Deacon Emeritus, as defined herein. There shall be no obligation to constitute as an active deacon one who has been ordained as a deacon in another Baptist Church, however he may become eligible for election as such as provided herein.
2. **Deacon Emeritus:** Any deacon properly installed according to these bylaws who has served faithfully as an active deacon of this church and who, by reasons of age, health or other physical deficiency, believes himself unable to continue to carry out the duties of a deacon (set forth in Sub-section A above). Any active deacon wishing to be elected to the position of Deacon Emeritus shall make this known to the Executive Committee at any regular meeting, for recommendation to the Church. [Amended 11/4/92]
3. **Inactive Deacon:** Any deacon properly installed according to these bylaws and not elected Deacon Emeritus, as defined herein, who, by reason of

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his resignation or by his failure to attend and participate in at least 75% of the regular monthly Executive Committee meetings within the previous church year, unless providentially hindered, or otherwise, has disqualified himself from the position of deacon.

D. Number and term of office:

1. There shall be no more than fourteen (14) active deacons.
2. The term of office for an active deacon shall be indefinite so long as said deacon remains in the classification of an active deacon.
3. Any deacon becoming inactive shall remain so for a minimum of two (2) years, after which time he may become eligible to serve again as an active deacon upon election by the church as provided herein.

E. Nomination procedure:

1. When the election of deacons becomes necessary as set forth herein, the Moderator shall, on the first Sunday in March, appoint a Deacon Nomination and Election Committee (DNEC) composed of three (3) active deacons, with one member of the committee designated by the Moderator as Chairman. The first Sunday in May shall then be designated as Deacon Nomination Sunday. (Amended 12/4/91)
2. The DNEC shall be responsible for conducting the nomination and election of deacons in keeping with the requirements set forth herein and shall establish and carry out the procedures therefor to allow for church-wide participation. In so doing, the DNEC may engage the assistance of other deacons and may incur reasonable costs in the election process, including those for clerical services.
3. Each church member 12 years of age and older shall be entitled to vote in the nomination and election process of deacons. Beginning on the Sunday two weeks prior to Deacon Nomination Sunday, the DNEC shall provide each of said members with a deacon nomination form containing the following information:
  - a. A list of the men who have been members of this Church for the last three years, during which time they have been enrolled in Sunday School and/or Discipleship Training with an attendance record of at least 65%, who have been a Christian and church member for at least 5 years, and who are at least 25 years of age. This list shall not include any men classified as active deacon or deacon emeritus, nor any classified as inactive deacon for less than two years. (Amended 8/7/91)
  - b. A list of the qualifications and duties of active deacons.

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c. The maximum number of men any such member may nominate, which shall be twice the number of vacancies to be filled, together with a notice that any form received marked for more than the maximum number allowed will not be counted.

d. The date by which the completed nomination form must be returned to the DNEC, which shall be no later than the specified time on Deacon Nomination Sunday.

4. On Deacon Nomination Sunday, at a specified time during the morning worship service, the ushers shall collect the nomination forms and deliver them to the DNEC Chairman. As soon as possible thereafter, the DNEC shall assemble to count the votes. Any nomination form marked for more than the maximum number allowed shall not be considered. The DNEC shall then develop a list of those nominated arranged in numerical order according to the number of votes received and shall deliver said list to the Nominee Interview Committee (NIC), as defined in Paragraph 5 below. The DNEC shall maintain all of the nomination forms until the election process is completed, after which time said forms are to be destroyed. The DNEC shall treat all of its proceedings as confidential.

5. The Moderator, Vice-Moderator and Pastor shall serve as the Nominee Interview Committee (NIC), with the Moderator serving as Chairman. The NIC, or any member thereof, shall contact nominees regarding qualifications, duties and willingness to serve if elected. The NIC shall first consider from the DNEC list the top number equal to twice the number of vacancies to be filled. These interviews may be conducted in no particular order. If, upon completion of these first interviews, it is determined that additional nominees are needed, the NIC shall continue down the DNEC list until the NIC develops a list of willing nominees consisting of not more than twice the number of vacancies to be filled. Said list shall then be delivered to the DNEC for preparation of ballots. The NIC shall treat all of its proceedings as confidential and shall destroy all of its records upon completion of its duties.

**F. Election Procedure:**

1. At the close of the morning worship service, on the fourth Sunday in May, the Moderator shall call the church into conference for the purpose of electing deacons. Said election may be rescheduled upon advance notice of at least two (2) weeks. [Amended 12/4/91]

2. Eligible members shall then be provided a ballot containing the list of nominees and appropriate instructions regarding the maximum number of vacancies to be filled together with notice that any ballot marked for more than the maximum number allowed will not be counted.

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3. The ushers shall, under the supervision of the Moderator, collect the ballots for delivery to the DNEC.

4. The DNEC shall then assemble, count the votes and tabulate the results. The candidates receiving the greatest number of votes shall be declared as elected in keeping with the number of vacancies to be filled. A runoff shall be held in the event of a tie, and may be scheduled as early as the following Sunday using the same procedure as set forth hereinabove.

5. The DNEC shall provide an alphabetical list of those so elected to the church clerk for recording in the minutes and otherwise made public to all members.

### G. Installation and ordination:

1. As soon as possible following the election of new deacons, an Ordination Council, composed of the Pastor and Active Deacons, will plan an ordination service for those requiring ordination. A week or more time lapse should be scheduled between the Ordination Council meeting and the ordination service.

2. In such instance as one who has been ordained as a deacon in another Baptist Church is elected as an active deacon, this church, acting through the active deacons, reserves the right to determine if his previous ordination by another Baptist Church is acceptable to this church.

3. The Ordination Council will also plan an installation service for all newly elected deacons, which may be combined with the ordination service.

4. The newly elected deacons shall assume their office upon such installation.

### H. Organization:

1. The Deacons will organize the family ministry plan so it will continue to function with the start of the new church year.

2. The deacons may appoint such committees among them as may be needed to accomplish the tasks assigned to them. They are empowered to select and enlist additional help from among the membership of the church as may be necessary from time to time to do their tasks.

## SECTION 3 - TRUSTEES

Three trustees elected by the church will hold in trust the church property. They shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property only after a specific vote of the church authorizing each action. It shall be the function of the

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trustees to affix their signatures to legal documents involving the sale mortgage, purchase, or rental of property or other legal documents where the signatures of trustees are required. Any member, 25 years of age and older, is qualified to serve as such a Trustee. Trustees shall serve on a rotating basis, with one new trustee being elected each year. The initial terms of the trustees shall be staggered at one, two, and three years, and, thereafter, their terms shall be for three years or until their successors are elected. While performing any authorized action, such trustees are immune from suit and not subject to civil liability arising from the conduct of such action, as provided for in Section 10-11-3, Code of Alabama 1975 (1987 Rep. Vol.).

### SECTION 4 - OTHER OFFICERS

A. The church shall elect such officers from the church membership as the church shall need for an efficient and orderly conduct of the staff functions of the church. Such officers shall be directly responsible to, and report to the church.

B. The following officer positions are hereby established:

1. **Moderator.** The Moderator shall preside over all business meetings of the Church. In the absence of the Pastor, the Moderator shall be the head of the Church and responsible to see that the program of the Church goes forward. He shall also serve as Deacon Chairman and Chairman of the Executive Committee. The Moderator shall not serve as Director of any of the church program organizations listed in Article V of these Bylaws.

2. **Clerk.** The Clerk shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings of the Church, prepare and forward any letters the Church may grant, and keep a correct roll of names of all members of the Church. The Clerk may be employed, or may employ another, as secretary to assist in the performance of such duties. The salary of such secretary shall have been coordinated with the Budget & Finance Committee. The Clerk shall not serve as Director of any of the church program organizations listed in Article V of these Bylaws.

3. **Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall keep a record of all moneys received and paid out by the Church and report each month at the regular business meeting. The Treasurer will also inform the Committee Chairmen who may have funds to expend of the amount budgeted and the balances available at least once per month at the regular business meeting. The Treasurer may be employed, or may employ another, as financial secretary to assist in the performance of such duties. The salary of such financial secretary shall have been coordinated with the Budget & Finance Committee. The Treasurer shall not serve as Director of any of the church program organizations listed in Article V of these Bylaws.

4. **Vice Moderator.** The Vice Moderator shall perform all duties and exercise all powers of the Moderator when the Moderator is absent or otherwise unable to act. By accepting this position, the Vice Moderator acknowledges that

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unless providentially hindered, he will accept the position of Moderator at the end of his term as Vice Moderator.

5. Parliamentarian. The Parliamentarian shall act as an advisor in meetings regarding parliamentary rules.

C. No member may hold more than one of the above officer positions concurrently.

D. The Church may establish such additional officer positions as the need may be determined. Such additional positions will be established by amendment of the bylaws accordingly.

ARTICLE III. CHURCH STAFF

The church shall call or employ such staff members as the church shall need. A job description shall be prepared by the Personnel Committee when the need for staff members is determined. Staff members shall be recommended to the church by the Executive Committee only after salary matters involved have been coordinated with the Budget & Finance Committee and the Pulpit & Worship Committee. All such staff members shall function under the administrative supervision of the Pastor unless the Pastor shall by specific written instructions specify to the contrary, or unless the job description of a staff member shall provide otherwise. [Amended 11/4/92]

ARTICLE IV. COMMITTEES

SECTION 1 - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A. The primary function of the Executive Committee shall be to recommend to the congregation suggested objectives and church goals; to review and coordinate program plans recommended by church officers, organizations, and committees; to recommend to the congregation the use of leadership, calendar time, and other resources according to program priorities; and to evaluate program achievements in terms of church goals and objectives.

B. The Executive Committee shall have as regular members the Pastor, the Music Director, the Sunday School Director, the Discipleship Training Director, the Woman's Missionary Union Director, the Brotherhood Director, the Chairman of the Ushers Committee, the Chairman of the Budget & Finance Committee, the Clerk, the Treasurer, and all of the Active Deacons.

C. All matters agreed upon by the Executive Committee calling for action not already authorized shall be recommended to the church for approval or disapproval. Such a recommendation shall be considered a motion at the Church Business meeting without the necessity of a second.

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D. Regular meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held immediately following the evening worship service on the first Sunday of each month. Such meeting may be postponed or rescheduled, and special meetings may be called, as may be necessary, with notice thereof being provided at any regular meeting or by announcement in the morning worship service and bulletin, if practicable.

E. Seven (7) members in attendance at any meeting of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum.

### SECTION 2 - NOMINATING COMMITTEE

A. **Interim Nominating Committee:** At the May business meeting, the Moderator shall appoint the Interim Nominating Committee composed of three members whose duty shall be to select and nominate the heads of the following Departments: (1) Sunday School, (2) Discipleship Training, (3) Brotherhood, (4) WMU (the WMU selects its own President and the Interim Nominating Committee accepts their nominee), and (5) Music. The Interim Nominating Committee nominates these department heads at the June business meeting. The Interim Nominating Committee is then discharged. Additional nominations may then be received from the floor at said meeting.

B. **Standing Nominating Committee:** Upon election by the Church, the department heads, plus the Pastor, or Moderator in the absence of a Pastor, become the Standing Nominating Committee, who then selects nominees for all other Officers, Leaders and Teachers as follows: (1) Moderator, (2) Vice Moderator, (3) Clerk, (4) Treasurer, (5) Teachers for Sunday School, (6) Leaders for Discipleship Training, (7) Brotherhood Leaders, (8) Leaders for WMU, (9) Choir Director, (10) Organists, (11) Pianists, (12) Parliamentarian, and (13) Trustee(s). These nominations are reported at the July business meeting. Additional nominations may then be received from the floor at said meeting. Upon election by the Church, these nominees become the Officers and Leaders for the new Church year and assume their respective places on October 1st.

C. Nothing herein shall prevent any member from nominating another person or persons for any office or committee.

### SECTION 3 - BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE

A. The members of the Budget & Finance Committee shall be responsible for presenting a proposed budget to the Church each year at the August business meeting, indicating by items the amount needed and sought for all local expenses and purposes, and in like manner for all Denominational or other approved recommendations for any fiscal matter that may arise during the fiscal year.

B. The committee shall coordinate very closely with the Treasurer and the Executive Committee in maintaining the budget and on all matters submitted to the church for approval.



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C. Committee members shall serve on a rotating basis for a three year term. The Committee shall select a new chairman each year at its first meeting after appointment or reappointment of its new member(s) by the Moderator. (Amended 11/9/94)

SECTION 4 - BENEVOLENCE COMMITTEE

A. The Department heads, plus the Pastor, or Moderator in the absence of a Pastor, shall function as the Benevolence Committee.

B. When emergencies arise such as sickness, hospitalization, accidents, death, fire, etc., and a member or members of Bethel feel there is a need the church should meet, they should contact the Benevolence Committee.

C. Three members of this committee must sign each authorization for an expenditure from the benevolence fund, which shall then be delivered to the Treasurer.

D. If this committee acts and finds a need beyond its ability to meet, it is the Committee's responsibility to recommend a special offering to the church. No special offering shall be taken without prior church approval.

SECTION 5 - ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE

A. Each year, this Church may elect one lay member who, along with the Pastor, shall represent this Church on the Executive Board of the Montgomery Baptist Association.

B. These representatives, along with any other member of this Church serving on an associational committee or otherwise holding a leadership role with the association, shall keep the church informed about associational activities.

SECTION 6 - PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

A. The Moderator, the Chairman of the Pulpit & Worship Committee, the Chairman of the Budget & Finance Committee, the Chairman of the Nursery Committee and the Chairman of the Buildings Committee shall function as the Personnel Committee.

B. The Personnel Committee shall be responsible for the evaluation of the job performance and salary of the Pastor and all staff members. (Amended 7/7/93)

C. The Personnel Committee shall submit a yearly salary proposal to the Budget & Finance Committee for consideration each June. (Amended 7/7/93)

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D. The Personnel Committee shall be responsible for determining the need for additional staff members and for preparing a job description when the need for staff members is determined.

E. The Personnel Committee shall review and attempt to resolve complaints against or by the Pastor and staff members. (Section 6 added 11/4/92, amended 7/7/93)

SECTION 7 - ADDITIONAL COMMITTEES

The following committees may be appointed as deemed necessary by the Moderator, with the Pastor's assistance, with the duties stated: (Amended 11/9/94)

A. Pulpit & Worship Committee

1. To work with the Pastor in securing supply speakers, revival preachers, musicians, singers, entertainers and the like; none of which shall be officially invited to this church prior to approval of this committee when an honorarium may be involved.

2. In carrying out its duties noted next above, this committee shall determine whether or not the approved budget provides adequate funding for the anticipated costs other than revival expense. In the event it is found that budgeted funds are insufficient, no special offering shall be taken without prior recommendation of this committee and approval by the church.

3. To be responsible for seeking out a Pastor, and, if necessary, an interim Pastor, should a vacancy occur.

4. To be responsible for studying the worship practices of the church and suggesting means to improve the worship of the church.

B. Nursery Committee

This is an administrative committee. The teaching ministry within the Nursery is a function of the Sunday School Department.

The responsibilities of this committee are as follows:

1. Careful work by the committee should insure a uniformly high quality of teaching each time the nursery child comes to the church as well as providing a more effective ministry to the parents of nursery children.

2. To engage the services of church members willing to work in the nursery during services or on other occasions if such occasions are sanctioned by the church, such as associational meetings and the like.

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3. To establish a written schedule whereby at least two (2) workers have agreed to work in the nursery at specified times.
4. To distribute the schedule to the workers, church secretary and Pastor, so as to allow the church secretary to continue to provide a reminder in advance for the workers as has been the practice in times past.
5. To advise workers that when they cannot meet the schedule it is their responsibility to provide a substitute.
6. To recommend to the Executive Committee such policies as the committee may consider appropriate to enable the church membership to gain maximum benefit from the nursery.
7. Subsequent to approval by the church, the committee should follow-up on said policies to insure that the church action is carried out.
8. To make recommendations to the Executive Committee with regard to the purchase and care of equipment and supplies, cleanliness, and the general care of the rooms.
9. To supervise paid nursery workers if such are employed.
10. To publicize the availability of the nursery service and the policies of the committee.

### C. Buildings Committee

This committee has a joint responsibility with the Grounds Committee for making the church properties the most attractive and well kept property in the community. God's house deserves the best attention that can be given to keep it worshipful and functional.

The responsibilities of this committee are as follows:

1. To maintain adequate and attractive buildings which include the sanctuary, education building, activities building and pastorium.
2. To supervise painting, building repairs, janitorial services, and maintenance of heating and cooling systems.
3. To make recommendations to the Executive Committee with regard to the employment of persons, and the purchase of supplies and equipment required to provide neat and attractive church buildings.

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4. To monitor or inspect the buildings from time to time to insure that the persons working on the buildings are in compliance with the committee's instructions.

5. To make recommendations to Executive Committee with regard to properly insuring church properties for loss due to fire, storm, etc., including liability insurance.

6. To establish rules governing the use of the church's buildings, facilities and grounds, except as may be established by the Kitchen & Fellowship Hall Committee.

D. Grounds Committee

1. To supervise maintenance of church grounds which include parking areas, lawns, sidewalks, shrubbery, and the like.

2. To make recommendations to the Executive Committee with regard to the employment of persons, and the purchase of supplies and equipment required to provide neat and attractive church grounds.

3. To monitor or inspect the grounds from time to time to insure that the persons working on the grounds are in compliance with the committee's instructions.

4. To maintain liaison with the Buildings Committee in the event that conditions arise that require joint action.

E. Kitchen & Fellowship Hall Committee

This is a house keeping and equipment management committee including use of the kitchen and fellowship hall. It is in no way responsible for the building per se. Its responsibilities are as follows:

1. To establish rules governing use of kitchen, kitchen equipment and supplies, and the fellowship hall, tables and chairs.

2. To review entire kitchen and fellowship hall operation and submit to the Executive Committee recommendations with regard to loaning equipment to members and/or others, specifically including recommendations that will minimize loss of equipment.

3. Subsequent to approval by the church of No's 1 and 2 above, to post these rules in some conspicuous place in the kitchen or fellowship hall.

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4. To establish complete inventory of utensils, tables, chairs, etc., and check same from time to time.

5. To maintain such liaison with Buildings Committee as may be required to maintain a functional facility.

**F. Building Planning Committee**

1. Based on the program of our church, to evaluate present buildings through survey and study to determine whether or not the buildings will meet program needs through the next five years.

2. If additional and/or improved space is needed to carry on desired program, to determine what buildings and changes will be necessary.

3. To make recommendations to the church concerning type and location of building or renovations, and, if necessary, the method of financing said recommended action.

4. To keep the church informed as to the progress of any building or renovation project, from the planning stage, through the construction stage, and until any financing is paid off.

**G. Long-range Planning Committee**

1. To discover and analyze long-range church and community needs.

2. To recommend long-range goals and long-range methods of meeting the goals to the church.

3. To prepare evaluations of long-range effectiveness of church programs.

**H. Publicity, Promotion & Public Relations Committee**

1. To be responsible for publicizing the church and her programs to the membership and to the adjacent community.

2. To work with the Grounds Committee to secure anything needed to project our church in the community (e.g.: signs).

3. This committee shall have charge of all general church publicity. All matters, programs, and plans of general news interest should be reported to this committee for action. In all promotional matters, advertising special programs and revivals, etc., the committee shall use every means available to inform the church membership and the general public.

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I. Flower Committee

1. To determine who desires to place flowers in church on special occasions as a memorial or for other reasons.
2. To prepare a written schedule for this and furnish a copy to the church secretary and the various donors.
3. To remind individual donors of their commitment on Wednesday night preceding the Sunday on which they are committed to providing flowers.
4. To be responsible for seeing that flowers are placed in church on Sundays other than those Sundays shown on the schedule mentioned above. This can be accomplished by solicitation of floral contributions from persons producing "in season" flowers or by purchase from florist.

J. Usher Committee

1. To be responsible for engaging men to perform this service from time to time at each church service including revivals and funerals.
2. To be responsible for ascertaining that ushers will be present and functioning at each individual service.

K. Memorial Committee

Responsible for working with the Treasurer in carrying out the church's policy with regard to memorial gifts to the Baptist Children's Home at Troy.

L. Hospitality Committee

1. To coordinate action required to provide food for church-wide fellowships and meals.
2. To secure lodging and meals for visiting speakers, choirs, musicians and the like when the visitor's presence is part of the approved church program.
3. To assist the Pastor in providing lodging, etc., for part time workers when such workers are approved by the church.

M. Music Committee

1. To be responsible for promoting interest in and attendance in the choir program of the church.

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2. To work with the choir director in making recommendations concerning maintenance of existing equipment or the purchase of new equipment.

3. To work with the Pulpit & Worship Committee in selecting a song leader for the revival.

N. Technicians Committee

1. To be responsible for the sound and lighting equipment and personnel.

2. To see that the various components of the sound system provide the best sound we can secure.

3. To train enough people to run the sound board and tape deck for all services, and be available for rehearsals for soloists and groups to sing in the worship services.

4. To provide lighting personnel as needed for special performances.

5. To make recommendations as to the purchase of equipment when needed.

O. Baptism Committee

1. To assist the Pastor in preparing for the ordinance of baptism by seeing that all of the candidates are notified, properly instructed, dressed and prepared for the ordinance. The committee is also responsible for seeing that the baptismal pool is filled and ready for the service.

2. To see that the dressing rooms are clean, neat and equipped. If new equipment is needed, the Buildings Committee should be approached for a recommendation to the church.

3. To see that baptismal robes are in good condition and that the robes are laundered and stored after use.

4. To see that candidates are notified well in advance.

5. To make sure the pool is emptied and everything in order after the services.

P. Lord's Supper Committee

1. To make sure that the equipment is polished and ready for use, including the cloths to cover the table.

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2. To be responsible for having the elements, unleavened bread and grape juice, available for the service.
3. Following each observance of the ordinance the committee should see that cups, trays, and linens used are carefully cleaned and stored in a safe, clean place.
4. The committee, when called upon, may assist in making the ordinance more meaningful through occasional emphasis and explanation in various organizations and departments of the church.

### Q. Youth Committee

1. To work with the Pastor and/or paid youth minister in coordinating all youth activities.
2. To plan, promote, and provide supervision for youth social and recreational activities.
3. To lead in enlisting additional youth to become involved in church programs.

### R. Library Committee

1. To seek to provide and promote the use of printed and audio-visual resources for the church, and to that end, provide consultation to church leaders and members.
2. To supervise the purchase of books, library materials and audio-visual aid equipment within the provisions of the budget.
3. To make a yearly inventory of books, library and audio-visual aid materials and equipment, and to file a copy thereof with the church clerk.
4. To be responsible for the organization and faithful performance of a library and/or media center sufficient to serve the needs of the church.
5. To work with the buildings committee to see that adequate space is provided therefor.

### S. Education Committee

1. To serve as the advisory committee to the Pastor and department heads, giving guidance to the planning, coordination, operation and evaluation of all programs within the educational ministry, including, but not limited to, January Bible Study, Baptist Doctrine Study, Home Mission Study, Foreign Mission



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Study and Vacation Bible School. No leader or teacher for such program shall be invited to this Church without the approval of this Committee.

2. To work with Buildings Committee in maintenance of all educational facilities.
3. To design various ways to help the educational organizations/committees inform the church membership of the total efforts within the educational ministry.
4. This committee shall not be limited to its members for formulating objectives or programs but shall feel free to seek help from any other source that would seem to be for the benefit of the church.
5. In consultation with the related committees, to formulate an annual budget for recommendation to the Budget & Finance Committee.

T. Evangelism & Prayer Committee

1. To endeavor to lead or challenge members to be a praying and witnessing congregation.
2. To establish a plan whereby the members will be aware of the importance of prayer in their personal lives and in the life of this church.
3. To establish special times of prayer with regard to special events, such as in times of disasters, revivals, and weeks of prayer for missions.

U. Missions Committee

1. To search out ways whereby the church can be more mission minded.
2. To make the church aware of special mission emphasis in world, home, state, association and church missions.
3. To seek mission understanding and development by church members in mission education and mission support information. This will involve developing an understanding of a growing commitment to associational missions and mission support through the Cooperative Program.

V. Community Missions Committee

1. To lead in developing a program of community missions ministries to meet the needs of church members and others to whom we should minister.

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2. To assist in the enlistment of volunteer workers for the community missions ministry.
3. To design ways of informing the church membership about the community missions ministry.
4. To develop policies for the operation of the community missions ministry.
5. To evaluate the community missions ministry and make recommendations when needed.
6. In consultation with the Pastor, to prepare an annual budget to be recommended to the Budget & Finance Committee.
7. To notify the Pastor of matters within the community that this committee thinks the Pastor would want to be aware of so as to enable him to meet his responsibilities.

### W. History Committee

1. To gather and preserve church records, documents, pictures, and articles of historical importance. For example:
  - a. Significant actions recorded in the minutes of Executive Committee meetings and church business meetings.
  - b. Significant membership, financial and organizational records.
  - c. Church paper and other programs.
  - d. Clippings and pictures of leaders, groups, buildings, etc.
  - e. Sound recordings of speeches, etc.
  - f. Biographical materials.
2. To have important records microfilmed.
3. To up-date the history of the church annually and provide for printing on a regular scheduled basis.
4. To prepare church history display as may be appropriate.
5. To periodically publish items that will make the membership more conscious of the rich heritage of our church.

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X. Bylaws Committee

1. To have a thorough working knowledge of church Bylaws.
2. To review the Bylaws annually as to need for up-dating.
3. To formulate any recommended changes to the Bylaws.
4. To present changes to the church according to Article X of the Bylaws.
5. To keep current the Manual of Administrative Policies.

SECTION 8 - MEMBER EX OFFICIO

The Pastor and Moderator shall be members ex officio of all bodies and committees, and shall be provided with notice of meetings thereof as practicable. Either of them may call any body together for the transaction of business, and may call the church together for special business meetings.

SECTION 9 - POLITY

The congregational form of government shall be preserved in this church. The assumption of authority by any individual or group apart from the responsibilities placed upon them by the Constitution or Bylaws is thoroughly inconsistent with the spirit and intention of the constitution, bylaws and the will of the church.

ARTICLE V. CHURCH PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONS

SECTION 1 - GENERAL

The Church shall maintain programs of Bible teaching; church member training, church leader training, new member orientation; mission education, action and support; and music education, training and performance. All organizations of the church shall be under church control, all officers being elected by the church and reporting regularly to the church. The Church shall provide the human resources, the physical resources, and the financial resources for the appropriate advancement of these programs.

SECTION 2 - SUNDAY SCHOOL

A. The Sunday School shall be the basic organization for the Bible teaching program. Its tasks shall be to teach the biblical revelation, reach persons for Christ and church membership, perform the functions of the church within its constituency, and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

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B. The Sunday School shall be organized by departments and/or classes, as appropriate for all ages, and shall be conducted under the direction of the Sunday School Director.

### SECTION 3 - DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING

A. The Discipleship Training organization shall serve as the training unit of the Church. Its tasks shall be to train church members to perform the functions of the church; train church leaders; orient new church members; teach Christian theology, Christian ethics, Christian history, and Church polity and organization; and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

B. Discipleship Training shall be organized by departments and/or classes, as appropriate for all ages, and shall be conducted under the direction of the Discipleship Training Director.

### SECTION 4 - WOMAN'S MISSIONARY UNION

A. The Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) shall be the mission education, mission action, and mission support organization of the church for women, young women, girls, and preschool children. Its tasks shall be to teach missions; engage in mission action; support world missions through praying and giving; and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

B. The WMU shall have such officers and organizations as the program requires. The WMU president shall be selected by its members.

### SECTION 5 - BROTHERHOOD

A. The Brotherhood shall be the church's organization for mission education, mission action, and mission support for men, young men, and boys. Its tasks shall be to teach missions; engage in mission action; support world missions through praying and giving; and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

B. The Brotherhood shall have such officers and organizations as the program requires under the general direction of the Brotherhood Director.

### SECTION 6 - MUSIC

A. The Church Music Program shall be the music education, training, and performance organization of the church. Its tasks shall be to teach music; train persons to lead, sing and play music; provide music in the church and community; and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

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B. The Church Music Program shall have such officers and/or organizations as the program requires under the general direction of the Music Director.

ARTICLE VI. ORDINANCES

SECTION 1 - BAPTISM

A person who receives Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith, who professes Him publicly at any worship service, and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord shall be received for baptism.

A. Baptism shall be by immersion in water. Physical baptism shall be delayed only when the candidate is physically incapacitated.

B. Baptism shall be administered by the Pastor or whomever the church shall authorize. The Baptism Committee shall assist in the preparation for and observance of baptism.

C. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service.

D. A person professing Christ and failing to be baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by the Pastor and/or staff and Deacons. If negative interest is ascertained, that person shall be deleted from the list of those awaiting baptism.

SECTION 2 - 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 fruit of the vine commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His second coming.

A. The Lord's Supper shall be observed quarterly, preferably the second Sunday of the quarter or as otherwise scheduled.

B. The Lord's Supper may be observed in the morning or evening worship service.

C. The Pastor and Deacons shall be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper.

D. The Lord's Supper Committee shall be responsible for the physical preparation of the Lord's Supper.

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ARTICLE VII. CHURCH MEETINGS

SECTION 1 - WORSHIP SERVICES

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday evening for preaching, instruction, evangelism, and for the worship of Almighty God. These meetings will be open for the entire membership of the church and for all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the Pastor.

SECTION 2 - SPECIAL SERVICES

Revival services and any other church meetings which will be essential in the promotion of the objectives of the church shall be placed on the church calendar.

SECTION 3 - REGULAR BUSINESS MEETINGS

Regular business meetings shall be held monthly on the Wednesday night following the first Sunday of the month.

SECTION 4 - SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS

A specially called business meeting may be held to consider special matters of significant nature. A one week notice of the subject, date, time and location must be given for the specially called business meeting unless extreme urgency renders such notice impracticable. Such notice, when practical, shall be by announcement at a Sunday morning worship service and notice in the bulletin. No business may be conducted at such a specially called meeting except as is described in the notice of said meeting, unless by the unanimous consent of those present.

SECTION 5 - QUORUM

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

SECTION 6 - PARLIAMENTARY RULES

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church.

ARTICLE VIII. CHURCH FINANCES

SECTION 1 - BUDGET

A. The Budget & Finance Committee, in consultation with the Executive Committee and Treasurer, shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget at the August business meeting.

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B. It is understood that membership in this church involves financial obligation to support the church and its causes with regular proportionate gifts.

C. No member of Bethel is authorized to purchase, order, or contract for items or services that are not included in the church budget, which must have a balance sufficient to cover said expenditure. Expenditures shall not be made beyond the budgeted amount without prior church approval. (Amended 11/1/92)

D. Offerings to defray revival costs shall be taken during the revival at such time as may be considered appropriate by the Pastor and Minister of Music.

E. No special offering for whatever cause shall be taken without prior approval of the church in a regular business meeting or a special meeting called to consider the matter.

F. Nothing herein shall preclude the receipt of gifts designated for special purposes.

SECTION 2 - ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES

All funds for any and all purposes shall pass through the hands of the church treasurer, or financial secretary, and be properly recorded on the books of the church.

A system of accounting that will adequately provide for the handling of all funds shall be the responsibility of the Budget & Finance Committee and the Treasurer.

SECTION 3 - FISCAL YEAR, CHURCH YEAR

The fiscal year of the church shall be September 1 through August 31. The church year begins on October 1 and ends on September 30.

**ARTICLE IX. CHURCH OPERATIONS MANUAL**

A special committee of the church shall develop a church operations manual to include church policies and procedures and organization charts depicting lines of responsibility in the administration of the church. The manual shall be kept in the church office and made available for use there by any member of the church. The Church Clerk shall maintain the manual. The Bylaws Committee shall review the manual at least annually, with authority to recommend changes for the church to consider. Any church member or church organization may initiate suggested changes in the manual.

Policies and procedures may be added, revised, or deleted by: (1) the recommendation of the church officer or organization to whose areas of assignment the policy or procedure relate, (2) discussion and/or recommendation by the Executive Committee, and (3) approval by the Church at a regular business meeting.

ARTICLE X. AMENDMENTS

Changes in the Constitution and Bylaws may be made at any regular business meeting of the church, provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous meeting, and copies of the proposed amendment available to members by posting for at least one Sunday. Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws shall be by a three-fourths majority of the members present and voting.

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*History:*      *Adopted:*      7/7/91  
                  *Amended:*      8/7/91  
                                  12/4/91  
                                  11/4/92  
                                  7/7/93  
                                  11/9/94

*Reprinted:*      8/1/93



# CONSTITUTION

## ARTICLE III. STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Holy Bible is the inspired word of God and shall be our sole and sufficient authority in all matters of faith and practice. The church subscribes in general to the doctrinal statement of the "Baptist Faith and Message" as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963 the year 2000.

## BYLAWS

Article I, Section 1, Paragraph B.

The exclusiveness indicated in paragraph A of this section is in no way intended to impede or prevent anyone from hearing the proclamation of the gospel. ~~To this end, we will seat any who present themselves in an orderly manner to attend our worship services.~~ No constitutional article, bylaw, or policy of Bethel Baptist Church will in any way be construed or exercised in any manner that would exclude anyone from participating in a non-disruptive manner in any activities of our fellowship excepting those activities exclusively reserved for members by the constitution, bylaws, or policies of Bethel Baptist Church.

Article IX. ~~CHURCH OPERATIONS MANUAL~~ CHURCH POLICIES & PROCEDURES

~~A special committee of the church shall develop a church operations manual to include church policies and procedures and organization charts depicting lines of responsibility in the administration of the church. The manual shall be kept in the church office and made available for use there by any member of the church. The Church Clerk shall maintain the manual. The bylaws committee shall review the manual at least annually, with authority to recommend changes for the church to consider. Any church member or church organization may initiate suggested changes in the manual.~~

The church may establish as may be deemed necessary policies and procedures to effect and enhance the faithful and efficient pursuit of the church's mission.

Initiation, deletion, or amendment of policies and procedures can be made by any church member, committee, or ministry by presentation in written form at any business meeting of the church and will be considered adopted if approved by a simple majority of members present. Policies and procedures may be directed towards a particular area or function, or may cover the entire membership.

Church policies and procedures will be recorded along with the date of adoption by the Church Clerk in a policies and procedures manual after having been adopted. The manual will be made available to any church member. Copies may be made and distributed as requested and/or necessary.

Policies and procedures duly adopted under this article will be considered a part of the church bylaws under this section and will have equal authority.

## Proposed Policy to be adopted under Article IX of the Bethel Baptist Church Bylaws

Due to our belief in the biblical teachings concerning marriage as stated in article III of our church constitution, no event of any sort that celebrates or in any way endorses a same sex union of any kind may be held in or on any property owned or leased by Bethel Baptist Church. Likewise Bethel Baptist Church will not sanction, endorse, or support such a union in any manner whatsoever.

Any paid or unpaid staff member or office holder of Bethel Baptist Church found in violation of church policy concerning same sex unions will be subject to termination and/or revocation of church membership.