

CHAPEL BAPTIST CHURCH

CHURCH CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS

Preamble

We, the members of Chapel Baptist Church, do ordain and establish the following articles to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

This Constitution and Bylaws is intended to provide order in the life of our church but must not hinder the work of the Holy Spirit in our midst. We recognize that correct order and strict adherence to what we have written here apart from the work of the Holy Spirit in our midst are of no value.

Article I – Name and Purpose

Section 1- Name

The name of this local body of believers shall be Chapel Baptist Church.

Section 2- Purpose

This church shall exist to glorify God through purposeful, Biblical discipling-making. **Matt. 28:19-20**

Section 3- Scope of Ministries

The church shall accomplish its purpose through proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ, teaching the Scriptures, maintaining a Godly fellowship of believers, sending missionaries into the world, and whatever other activities the church may deem appropriate.

Section 4- Definition

This church shall be organized as a church exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law).

Article II- Statement of Faith and Covenant

Section 1- Statement of Faith

A. THE BIBLE

We believe that the Bible (consisting of 66 books) is the inspired Word of God, without error in the original writing, the complete revelation of God's will for the salvation of man, and the final authority for Christian belief and behavior. We believe that God preserves His Word to every generation. (**Psalm 12:6 & 7; Matt. 24:35; II Timothy 3:16 & 17; II Peter 1:20 & 21**)

We believe that God has preserved His Word through the traditional Hebrew and Greek manuscripts and that the King James Version is the best translation of those manuscripts. Therefore, we use it exclusively in all of our preaching and teaching ministries.

We believe that the proper method of Biblical Interpretation is the literal, grammatical, and historical method.

B. THE TRINITY

We believe in one God, Creator of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections. (**Genesis 1:1; Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19; John 1:1-3 & 14, 4:24, 10:30; Acts 5:1-4**)

C. GOD THE FATHER

We believe in God the Father. He is perfect in holiness, infinite in wisdom, measureless in power, merciful toward men, hearing and answering prayer, providing salvation to all who come to Him through Christ. (**Matt. 6:9-13; Luke 11:13; I John 4:14**)

D. GOD THE SON

We believe that Jesus Christ is absolute Deity, the eternal Son of God, who became man without ceasing to be God. We believe He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinners. (**Isa. 7:14, 9:6; Luke 1:34-35; John 1:1 & 14; II Cor. 5:19-21; Gal. 4:4 & 5**)

We believe that Jesus Christ lived a sinless life and died for the sins of mankind on the cross, thus, being a perfect and complete sacrifice. (**Rom. 3:24 & 25; II Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15, 9:14, 28; I Peter 2:22, 3:18**)

We believe that Jesus Christ rose literally and physically from the dead, ascended into heaven where He is now seated on the right hand of the Majesty on high, and ever lives to intercede as our High Priest and Advocate. (**John 2:19-22; Acts 1:9-11; Rom. 8:34; I Cor. 15:4-8; I Tim. 2:5; Heb. 1:3, 4:14, 7:25, 8:1, 9:24; I John 2:1 & 2**)

E. GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is absolute Deity and that He convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He regenerates, baptizes, seals, indwells, fills, enlightens, guides, and empowers the believer for Godly living and service. (**John 3:5, 16:8, 16:13 & 14; Acts 1:8, 5:3-4; I Cor. 2:9-12, 3:16, 12:13; Eph. 4:30, 5:18**)

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the Divine Teacher who enables believers to understand the Scriptures. It is the privilege and duty of the saved to be controlled by Him. Evidence of His control is the fruit of the Spirit. (**John 14:26, 16:13; Gal. 5:22-25; Eph. 5:18; I John 2:20 & 27**)

We believe that the Holy Spirit gives every believer spiritual gifts at the moment they are saved and that these gifts are to be used for evangelization of the lost and the edification of the saved. (**Rom. 12:3-8; I Cor. 12:4-11 & 28**)

We believe that some gifts of the Holy Spirit are permanent and are to be used throughout the Church Age. We also believe that four of the spiritual gifts were temporary and given during the Apostolic Age for the purpose of confirming the ministry of the apostles and the founding of the Church. Having fulfilled their purpose, they are not given today. The temporary gifts (also called sign gifts) were the gifts of miracles, healing, tongues, and interpretation of tongues. Therefore, we will not receive or retain in membership any who claim to practice these gifts. (**I Cor. 1:22, 13:8-13, 14:21-22; Heb. 1:1 & 2, 2:3 & 4**)

F. SATAN

We believe in the personality of Satan. He is the author of sin. He was instrumental in the fall of the human race into sin. He is the avowed enemy of God and man and shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire. (**Job 1:6 & 7; Isa. 14:12-15; Ezek. 28:11-19; Matt. 4:1-11, 25:41; John 8:44; Eph. 6:11 & 12; Rev. 20:10**)

G. MAN

We believe that man was created directly by God in His own image and likeness. The entire human race became alienated from God and eternally lost when Adam sinned. The natural man is unable to remedy his lost condition. We believe that God created the universe in six literal 24-hour periods. We reject evolution, the Gap Theory, the Day-Age Theory, and Theistic Evolution as unscriptural theories of origin. (**Gen. 1 & 2, 3:6-12; Ex. 20:11; Romans 3:10 & 23, 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3, 4:17-19; Rom. 3:23, 5:12; I John 1:8-10**)

H. SIN

We believe that sin is any thought, attitude, or action, which does not conform to the character and nature of God as, revealed in the Scriptures. (**I Peter 1:16; I John 3:4**)

I. SALVATION

We believe that the salvation of mankind required the substitutionary death of Christ including the literal shedding of His blood. (**Rom.3:24-26; Heb. 9:22; I Peter 3:18**)

We believe that saving faith includes repentance. Repentance involves a change of heart, mind, and desire towards God, self, and sin. Genuine repentance is demonstrated in the life of those who trust Christ. (**Luke 13:3-5, 24:47; Acts 3:19, 17:30**)

We believe that salvation is a free gift of God, apart from human works, received through faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. (**John 1:12, 3:16; I Cor. 15:1-4; Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5**)

We believe that salvation involves deliverance from the penalty of sin at the moment of regeneration, from the power of sin during the Christian life here on earth, and from the presence of sin when believers die and go into the presence of the Lord or at the rapture of the church. (**Titus 2:11-13**)

J. ETERNAL SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER

We believe that all born again believers are eternally secure in Christ and shall never come into condemnation for sin. The security of the believer is based upon the eternal purposes of God, the sufficiency of the atonement of Christ for sinners, the nature of the gift of everlasting life, the present and unending intercession and advocacy of Christ in heaven, the unchangeable promises of God, and the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit. (**John 6:37-40, 10:27-29; Rom. 8:1, 38-39; I Cor. 1:4-8, 6:11 & 19; Eph. 1:13-14; Heb. 7:25; I Peter 1:4 & 5; I John 2:1-2, 5:13**)

While it is the believer's privilege to rejoice in their security in Christ, it should not lead to carelessness concerning sin. (**Romans 6:1-14; Gal. 5:13; Titus 2:11-14**)

K. THE ETERNAL STATE

1. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all people. The saved are raised to eternal life and the unsaved to judgment and eternal punishment. (**Matt. 25:46; John 5:28 & 29, 11:25-26; Rev. 20:5 & 6, 12 & 13**)
2. We believe that at death the souls of the redeemed are absent from the body and present with the Lord where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection where spirit, soul, and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord. (**Luke 23:43; II Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23, 3:21; I Thess. 4:16-17**)
3. We believe that after death the souls of unbelievers remain in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection when the soul and body are reunited after which they shall appear before the Great White Throne Judgment and cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment, (**Matt. 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; II Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6 & 7; Rev. 20:11-15**)

L. THE BODY OF CHRIST

We believe that the true Church began on the day of Pentecost. It is a living organism and that it is the "body of Christ" of which He is the Head. The "body of Christ" is made up of all saved people. (**Acts 2:1-4; I Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:22-23, 5:23; Col. 1:18**)

We believe that local churches are the visible representation of the body of Christ in a local community. A local church is a group of born again baptized believers voluntarily associated together for the ministry of the Word, the mutual edification of its members, the defense and propagation of the faith, and the observance of the ordinances. (**I Cor. 1:2, 16:19; Acts 2:41-47**)

We believe that a local church is a sovereign independent body, free from any external authority or control, exercising its own divinely awarded gifts, precepts, and privileges under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. (**Matt. 18:15-17; Eph. 4:11-16**)

We believe that water baptism by immersion and the Lord's Table are ordinances to be observed by the Church during this present age. They are, however, not to be regarded as a means of salvation. (**Acts 2:41, 8:12, 26-40, 10:44-48; I Corinthians 11:23-33**)

M. SEPARATION OF BELIEVERS

We believe that all believers are called unto a life of separation from worldly and sinful practices. (**Rom. 12:1-2; II Cor. 6:14-17; Gal. 5:16-25; James 4:4; I John 2:16, 3:3**)

N. TWO NATURES

We believe that all who are born again possess two natures with the provision made for the new nature to be victorious over the old nature through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. We believe that all claims to the eradication of the old nature in this life are unscriptural. (**Rom. 6:13; Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:1-10; I Pet. 1:14-16; I John 3:5-9**)

O. THE RAPTURE AND THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

We believe in the personal, imminent return of our Lord Jesus Christ Who will rapture believers prior to the seven-year tribulation period and that He will subsequently return to the earth at the end of the seven-year tribulation with His saints to establish His millennial kingdom. We believe that this blessed hope should have a vital influence on the personal life and service of the believer. (**Acts 1:11; I Cor. 15:51-52; I Thess. 1:10, 4:16-17; Rev. 19:11-21**)

P. MISSIONS

We believe that it is the obligation of every born again believer to bear witness to the truths revealed in the Word of God through their life and to proclaim the Gospel to the unsaved. We believe that God has given the church a great commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations. As ambassadors of Christ, we must use all available means to go to the foreign nations and not wait for them to come to us. (**Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; II Cor. 5:11 & 19-20**)

Q. SEPARATION OF THE CHURCH

We believe that local churches should be separate from all affiliation, fellowship, and cooperation with those that deny the true Christian faith. We believe that our church should refuse to be drawn into compromising alliances, even with well-meaning evangelical people, whereby our testimony would be impaired and our position confused even though beneficial results may be produced. (**Acts 20:27; Rom. 16:17; Eph. 5:11; II Tim. 1:13, 3:5; II John 9-11**)

R. CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: the home, the church, and the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including those in authority) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. (**Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:22-24; 6:1-3; Heb. 13:17; I Peter 2:13-14**)

S. ISRAEL

We believe in the sovereign selection of Israel as God's eternal covenant people, that she is now dispersed because of disobedience and rejection of Christ, and that she will be gathered in her promised land after the completion of the church. We believe that whatever promises God has made to Israel, which have not been fulfilled at His Second Coming, will be fulfilled during the millennium. (**Gen. 12:1-5, 13:14-17; Ezekiel 37; Rom. 11:1-32**)

T. GIVING

We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to support their local church sacrificially and cheerfully through tithes and offerings.

We believe that tithing is an effective principle that God has used to meet the needs of New Testament churches. We do not believe that tithing is a law binding upon Christians in the New Testament, as it was a law binding upon Jews in the Old Testament. The practice of tithing is encouraged but not required for membership at Chapel Baptist Church.

We believe that, while the principle of the tithe is the basis for giving, every Christian should give offerings over and above the tithe to support the work of the church. (**Gen. 14:20; Prov. 3:9-10; Mal. 3:8-10; Acts 4:34-37; I Cor. 16:2; II Cor. 9:6-7; Gal. 6:6; Eph. 4:28; I Tim. 6:17-18; I John 3:17**)

Section 2- Authority of our Statement of Faith

This Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all we believe. We do believe, however, that it accurately represents the teaching of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members.

Section 3 - Church Covenant

As an expression of our commitment to the Lord and our fellow church members, we adopt the following church covenant.

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, we do now, in the presence of God, angels, 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 give it a sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and private devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred, acquaintances, and all others; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful to 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 and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember 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 Savior, to secure it without delay.

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

Article III – Church Government

Section 1- Congregation

The government of Chapel Baptist Church is vested in the congregation and the will of the congregation as expressed by its vote is final. The congregation is responsible alone to the Head of the church, the Lord Jesus Christ and to no outside ecclesiastical authority.

Congregational authority shall include:

- A.** Approval of changes to the Constitution and Bylaws.
- B.** Approval of candidates for Pastoral positions.
- C.** Approval of the annual budget.
- D.** Approval of the Master Plan of the church.
- E.** Approval of the purchase or sale of land, buildings, new construction, or major renovations to existing buildings.
- F.** Approval of other matters of congregational concern which may arise which are not in conflict with this Constitution and Bylaws.
- G.** Election of officers.
- H.** Acceptance and dismissal of members.

Section 2- Officers

The New Testament teaches that there are two church offices. The first is the office of Pastor/Bishop/Elder (**Acts 20:17-28; I Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-7; I Peter 5:1-4**). The second is the office of deacon (**Acts 6:1-8; I Tim. 3:8-10 & 12-13**). All other officers, staff members, or employees serve to assist the pastor(s) and deacon(s) in carrying out their Biblical responsibilities.

The church may have as many pastors and deacons as its size and work demands. No pastor(s) or deacon(s) shall have been divorced, be a member of a secret order or lodge, use alcoholic beverages, tobacco, or drugs (except under the direction of a physician). All pastor(s) and deacon(s) shall be men. All pastors, officers, staff members, or employees shall be in whole-hearted agreement with the Constitution and Bylaws without mental reservation.

Nominations for the offices of deacon, treasurer, and assistant treasurer shall be made to the church by the pastor(s) and deacon(s).

A. Senior Pastor

1. Qualifications

The Senior Pastor, hereafter referred to as the “the Pastor,” shall profess faith in and exhibit a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. He shall meet the qualifications of **I Timothy 3:1-7** and **Titus 1:5-9**.

2. Duties

- a.** He shall be overseer and under-shepherd of the church, Jesus Christ being the Chief Shepherd. He shall have the ultimate responsibility for the leadership and spiritual ministry of the church including supervision of the pulpit, administration of the ordinances, and the tender care and spiritual interest of the body.
- b.** He shall have the ultimate responsibility and authority for the organization, direction, and supervision of all church staff members and volunteers. Church staff members shall be defined as all paid employees of the church and its subsidiary organizations.
- c.** He shall preach regularly at the church services, administer the ordinances, supervise the teaching ministries of the church, and act as moderator of all church family meetings, staff meetings, and pastor/deacon meetings.

- d. He shall be an ex-officio member of any and all committees or church organizations with the right to attend all meetings or to designate a representative to attend in his place.
- e. He shall lead the staff and congregation in accomplishing the purposes of the church.
- f. He shall structure the church staff to carry out the purpose of the church.
- g. He shall, with the concurrence of the pastor(s) and deacon(s), appoint committees and ministry leaders of the church which shall assist him in carrying out his ministry. All committees of the church shall report to him.
- h. He shall, with the concurrence of the pastor(s) and deacon(s), determine the proper uses of the church building and equipment outside of the established ministries of the church.
- i. His objective shall always be equipping the members to do the work the ministry.
- j. He shall, with the concurrence of the pastor(s) and deacon(s), be responsible for the employment and termination of all church workers whether paid or unpaid including staff members, ministry leaders, and ministry workers.

3. Provision and Care

- a. The deacon(s) shall annually review the matters of salary, insurance, retirement, and other compensation as they deem appropriate. Recommendations for change regarding the same shall be presented to the church at the Annual Church Family Meeting for a vote of the church.
- b. The Pastor shall be paid weekly and shall have an annual vacation of four weeks.
- c. The Pastor may, with the concurrence of the pastor(s) and deacon(s), minister in other churches, conferences, camps, or on the mission field apart from his annual vacation. He may also, with the concurrence of the pastor(s) and deacon(s), attend conferences or special meetings which will benefit him and/or the church apart from his annual vacation.
- d. The Pastor shall, with the concurrence of the pastor(s) and deacon(s), determine his own days off, sick time, and holidays, bearing in mind fulfillment of the duties of his office, his personal and family responsibilities, and his testimony before the congregation.

4. Calling

- a. When the office of pastor becomes vacant, the deacons, shall, without delay, look for a candidate to recommend to the congregation for the office of Pastor. Once the Deacons agree on a candidate, they shall invite him to meet and minister to the congregation.
- b. The candidate shall be presented to the congregation for an official vote at a church family meeting called for this purpose. If the candidate receives a three-quarters vote of those members present and voting, he shall be extended an invitation to become the Senior Pastor. The invitation shall be in writing and include the offer of salary and benefits. If the candidate accepts the position, he shall serve for an indefinite term.
- c. The details of the candidating process and call shall be at the discretion of the deacons unless they are otherwise specified in this Constitution and Bylaws.
- d. The pastor(s) and deacon(s) shall be responsible for pulpit supply when the position of Senior Pastor is vacant.

5. Termination

- a. The Pastor shall serve faithfully until the Holy Spirit leads he, the pastor(s), and the deacon(s) to see a new call for him. When the pastor decides to resign, he shall give notice by letter of resignation to the church two months in advance, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon.
- b. In the event that the Pastor fails to fulfill his responsibilities to uphold the spirit and letter of the Constitution and Bylaws or the qualifications for a pastor as outlined in the Scriptures; the deacons shall speak to him in love, face to face, spelling out his failure in light of the Scriptures. If the situation is not resolved, the deacons shall submit a recommendation to a properly called Church Family Meeting for the purpose of dismissing him from his office. The dismissal shall come by a three-quarters vote of those members present and voting. If dismissed, the pastor shall be given two months severance pay, two months health insurance coverage, and payment for any unused vacation.
- c. It is a serious matter to charge a pastor with failure to fulfill his responsibilities, to uphold the spirit and letter of the Constitution and Bylaws, or the qualifications for a pastor as outlined in the Scriptures. Great harm can come to the Pastor, his family, or the church through carelessness in this area. Therefore, great care should be exercised by those who accept this responsibility. **I Tim. 5:19; Gal. 6:1**

B. Assistant Pastors

1. Qualifications

The Assistant Pastor(s) shall profess faith in and exhibit a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. He shall meet the qualifications of **I Timothy 3:1-7** and **Titus 1:5-9**.

2. Duties

The duties of the Assistant Pastor(s) shall be determined by the Senior Pastor, with the concurrence of the pastor(s) and deacon(s).

3. Provision and Care

- a. The Senior Pastor and deacon(s) shall annually review the matters of salary, insurance, retirement, and other compensation as they deem appropriate. Recommendations for change in the same shall be presented to the church at the Annual Church Family Meeting for a vote of the church.
- b. The Assistant Pastor(s) shall be paid weekly and shall have an annual vacation of four weeks.
- c. The Assistant Pastor(s) may with the concurrence of the pastor(s) and deacon(s) minister in other churches, conferences, camps, or on the mission field apart from his annual vacation. He may also, with the concurrence of the pastor(s) and deacon(s), attend conferences or special meetings which will benefit him and/or the church apart from his annual vacation.
- d. The Assistant Pastor(s) shall, with the concurrence of the pastor(s) and deacon(s), determine his own days off, sick time, and holidays, bearing in mind fulfillment of the duties of his office, his personal and family responsibilities, and his testimony before the congregation.

4. Calling

- a. When it is determined by the pastor(s) and deacon(s) that the pastoral requirements of the congregation demand an additional pastor they shall secure a candidate to recommend to the church for the position.

- b. The candidate shall be presented to the congregation for an official vote at a church family meeting called for this purpose. If the candidate receives a three-quarters vote of those members present and voting, he shall be extended an invitation to become an Assistant Pastor. The invitation shall be in writing and include the offer of salary and benefits. If the candidate accepts the position, he shall serve for an indefinite term.
- c. The details of the process shall be at the discretion of the pastor(s) and deacon(s) unless they are otherwise specified in this Constitution and Bylaws.

5. Termination

- a. The Assistant Pastor(s) shall serve faithfully until the Holy Spirit leads he, the pastor(s), and the deacon(s) to see a new call for him. When an assistant pastor decides to resign, he shall give notice by letter of resignation to the church one month in advance, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon.
- b. In the event that an Assistant Pastor fails to fulfill his responsibilities, to uphold the spirit and letter of the Constitution and Bylaws, or the qualifications for a pastor as outlined in the Scriptures, the pastor(s) and deacon(s) shall speak to him in love, face to face, spelling out his failure in light of the Scriptures. If the situation is not resolved to the satisfaction of the pastor(s) and deacon(s), the Assistant Pastor shall be dismissed by a three-quarters vote of the pastor(s) and deacon(s). If dismissed, the Assistant Pastor shall be given two months severance pay, two months health insurance coverage, and payment for any unused vacation.
- c. It is a serious matter to charge an Assistant Pastor with failure to fulfill his responsibilities, to uphold the spirit and letter of the Constitution and Bylaws, or the qualifications for a pastor as outlined in the Scriptures. Great harm can come to the Assistant Pastor, his family, or the church through carelessness in this area. Therefore, great care should be exercised by those who accept this responsibility. **1 Tim. 5:19; Gal. 6:1**

C. Deacons

1. Definition

The deacons shall be servants of the church in accordance with the meaning of the word in the New Testament and the example in **Acts 6:1-6**. The Greek word for deacon was a common, everyday, household word for a ministering servant.

The deacons are not an administrative board responsible for overseeing the church. They are a team of servants committed to the success of the Pastor's ministry and the spiritual well being of the church.

2. Qualifications

The deacons shall profess faith in and exhibit a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. They shall meet the qualifications of **I Timothy 3:8-10, 12-13.**

3. Duties

- a. The deacons are to assist the pastor in fulfilling his office in whatever ways he deems necessary, including, but not limited to, promoting the spiritual welfare of the church, making preparation for observance of baptism and the Lord's Table, make recommendations with the Pastor for membership and discipline, preparing and administrating the church budget, care, maintenance, and repair of all church property and equipment.
- b. The deacons serve as the Board of Trustees of the corporation. As the trustees of the corporation, they shall exercise only the following specific powers:
 - (1) To purchase, hold, lease, or otherwise acquire real and personal property on behalf of the church and to take real and personal property by will, gift, or bequest on behalf of the church.
 - (2) To sell, convey, transfer, lease, assign, exchange, or otherwise dispose of the real and personal property of the church .
 - (3) To exercise all powers for the dissolution of the church corporation if such action is mandated by a vote of the church membership.

4. Organization and Term of Office

- a. Immediately following the Annual Church Family Meeting, the Deacons shall meet to elect, from their own number, a chairman who shall serve as president of the corporation, a vice chairman, and a secretary who shall also serve as the Church Clerk.

- b. The deacons shall be elected to a term of three years. Their election shall take place at the Annual Church Family Meeting and require a three-quarters vote of those members present and voting at which time the term of office of all deacons not reelected shall expire.

5. Termination

- a. In the event that a deacon fails to fulfill his responsibilities, to uphold the spirit and letter of the Constitution and Bylaws, or the qualifications for a deacon as outlined in the Scriptures, the pastor(s) and deacon(s) shall speak to him in love, face to face, spelling out his failure in light of the scriptures. If the situation is not resolved to the satisfaction of the pastor(s) and deacon(s), the deacon shall be dismissed by a three-quarters vote of the pastor(s) and deacon(s).
- b. It is a serious matter to charge a deacon with failure to fulfill his responsibilities, to uphold the spirit and letter of the Constitution and Bylaws, or the qualifications for a deacon as outlined in the Scriptures. Great harm can come to a deacon, his family, or the church through carelessness in this area. Therefore, great care should be exercised by those who accept this responsibility. **I Tim. 5:19; Gal. 6:1**

D. Clerk

The clerk shall:

1. Be chosen from the Board of Deacons.
2. Certify and keep in a safe place the original bylaws or a copy, including amendments the Constitution and Bylaws.
3. Keep a record of the proceedings of the meetings of the pastor(s) and deacon(s), with the time and place of holding, the notice of the meeting given, and the names of those present at the meeting.
4. Sign, certify, or attest documents as may be required by law.
5. See that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provision of these bylaws. In case of the absence or disability of the Clerk, or his refusal or neglect to act, notice may be given and served by the Pastor or by the Chairman of the Board of Deacons.
6. Be custodian of the records of the church, including the membership roll, baptisms, and certificates of ordination.

7. See that reports, statements, certificates, and all other documents and records required by law are properly kept and filed.
8. Show the minutes of the meetings of the pastor(s) and deacon(s) or Church Family Meetings on terms provided by the pastor(s) and deacon(s), to persons determined appropriate by the pastor(s) and deacon(s).
9. Keep an account of any special events in the life of the church, which are of historical interest and give a report of the church membership roll at the Annual Church Family Meeting.
10. Keep all records of the church accurately and securely. They shall be delivered to any successor upon leaving office.
11. Serve as secretary of the corporation.
12. Perform other duties as requested by the pastor(s) and/or deacon(s).

E. Treasurer

The treasurer shall:

1. Have charge and custody of, and be responsible for, all funds of the Church, and deposit all funds in the name of the Church in banks, trust companies, or other depositories as shall be selected by the pastor(s) and deacon(s).
2. Disburse, or cause to be disbursed, the funds of the Church as may be directed by the pastor(s), deacons(s), and/or the budget adopted at the Annual Church Family Meeting, taking proper vouchers for disbursements. Expenditures not authorized in the Church budget over \$500 must be approved by a vote of the church.
3. Provide to the pastor(s) and deacon(s) a monthly financial report of all income, disbursements, and account balances.
4. Cooperate with the pastor(s) and deacon(s) in the annual auditing process of the church finances.
5. Perform other duties as requested by the pastor(s) and deacon(s).

F. The Assistant Treasurer

The Assistant Treasurer shall:

1. Keep an accurate account of and give receipts for all contributions, gifts, and donations to the Church.
2. Assist the Treasurer in the carrying out of his/her duties as requested.
3. Perform the duties of the Treasurer in the event he/she is unable for any reasons to fulfill them.
4. Perform other duties as requested by the pastor(s) and deacon(s).

G. Election

1. The Clerk shall be appointed from among the deacon(s) by the pastor(s) and deacon(s).
2. The Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer shall be elected at the Annual Church Family Meeting by a three-quarters vote of those members present and voting.
3. In the event either the Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer are unable for whatever reason to fulfill his or her duties the pastor(s) and deacon(s) may appoint a temporary acting Treasurer to serve until the next quarterly church family meeting at which time the congregation shall elect someone to fulfill the remainder of their term.

Article IV – Membership

Section 1- Requirements for Membership

- A.** Membership in Chapel Baptist is open to anyone who has received Jesus Christ as Savior, has been baptized by immersion as a public confession of their faith after receiving Christ, and is in full agreement with the Constitution and Bylaws of the church.
- B.** Membership shall be granted upon a three-quarters vote of the members present and voting at any church family meeting or after any church service. Such vote shall take place at the recommendation of the pastor(s) and deacon(s). Prospective members shall attend any classes, interviews, or meetings as required by the pastor(s) and deacon(s) prior to recommendation to the church for a vote.

- C. In cases where those desiring membership are members of another church of like faith and practice, the clerk of Chapel Baptist shall write and obtain a letter of recommendation from the other church before membership is granted at Chapel Baptist. The requirement for a letter of recommendation can be waived at the discretion of the pastor(s) and deacon(s) when circumstances warrant.
- D. No person involved with or holding membership in any secret order or lodge will be considered for church membership. Any person in that position who desires church membership must first withdraw membership and association with the organization.

Section 2- Responsibilities of Members

- A. Members of this church shall strive to live according to the Church Covenant, regularly attend the services of the church, support the church financially, pray for and support the leadership of the church, and promote the spiritual welfare of the church by influence and example. Members shall make themselves available for service in the church in accordance with the abilities and gifts God has given them.
- B. Members who become dissatisfied with the practice of any pastor, deacon, member, or ministry leader shall first share their concern with the respective individual. If the concern cannot be substantially resolved after good-faith discussions between the parties, the member may involve one or two more pastor(s) or deacon(s) of the church with the goal of resolving the concerns. If the matter cannot be resolved, the parties must submit to the Church for the Church's binding determination upon the matter.
- C. At each level, the member shall make a good-faith effort to resolve the problem before proceeding to the next level. The parties involved must exercise wisdom and discernment before proceeding to the next level of/for resolution. No pastor, deacon, member, or ministry leader shall violate any provision of **Matt. 5:23-24** or **18:15-17** in an attempt to resolve such difficulties.

Section 3- Privileges of Members

- A. Only active members in good standing, who have demonstrated faithfulness in their personal walk with the Lord and in their relationship to the church, shall be eligible to hold positions of leadership or employment in the church or any of its organizations, to serve in any way in a regular church ministry, or to receive a letter of recommendation to another church.

- B.** Only active members in good standing and who are at least 18 years of age may speak or vote in a church family meeting. For the purposes of this Constitution and Bylaws the word “active” shall describe those who have attended the majority of public services for the preceding six months.
- C.** Those who are not year round residents may assist in ministries of Chapel Baptist Church at the discretion of the pastor(s) and deacon(s) provided they are saved and agree with the Statement of Faith and Covenant.

Section 4- Discipline of Members

A. Responsibility

Mutual accountability and discipline within the church is commanded by God in Scripture and is an important responsibility of a Biblical church. **Matt. 18:15-17; I Cor. 5:1-13; II Cor. 2:5-11; Gal. 6:1; II Thess. 3:6; Titus 3:10**

B. Purpose

1. To restore a fallen Christian to fellowship with God and the church.
2. To preserve the honor and glory of God.
3. To protect the integrity of the church.
4. To prevent members from being tempted, misled, deceived, and otherwise harmed through the deceitfulness of sin.

C. Causes For Discipline

1. Negligent Members

Any member who is willfully negligent toward his church duties and demonstrates such negligence through absence from the services for at least six consecutive months shall be subject to removal from membership.

The pastor(s) and deacon(s) shall seek to recover such a member to the Lord’s work by visiting and encouraging them to be more faithful to the responsibilities and privileges of membership. If they reject this encouragement, they shall be subject to church discipline

2. Erring Members

If a member errs in doctrine or conduct, those members having knowledge of such error shall seek to correct him in a Biblical manner. This shall begin with personal consultation, followed by informing the pastor(s) and deacon(s) who shall then seek repentance and restoration of the erring member. If the member refuses to be corrected, they shall be subject to church discipline.

3. Quarreling Members

Differences between members should be settled privately according to the pattern outlined in **Matt. 18:15-16**. If the parties will not follow this pattern, or reconciliation cannot be reached, the pastor(s) and deacon(s) shall become involved in order to preserve peace in the church. If the attitude and actions persist, they shall be subject to discipline.

4. Rebellious and Divisive Members

Scripture warns against the harm a factious person (**Titus 3:9-10**, “heretic”) and one who is “disorderly” (**II Thess. 3:6**) can do to a church. Persons who rebel against the spiritual leadership of the church, are perpetual gossips, endeavor to influence others against the leadership, or who make constant problems or trouble in the church, are destructive and disturb the peace. Such persons are to be admonished by the pastor(s) and deacon(s). If the attitude and actions persist, they shall be subject to discipline.

5. Accused Members

Accusations of a member of immoral, improper, or unchristian conduct shall be submitted in writing to the pastor(s) and signed by the accuser.

The pastor(s) shall investigate the matter for whether or not the charges appear to be valid and whether or not the pattern of **Matt. 18:15-16** is applicable and has been followed.

If the accusations appear to be valid, the accuser and accused shall willingly meet with the pastor(s) and deacon(s) to discuss and review the accusations in detail. If the pastor(s) and deacon(s) feel the accusations are valid and the erring individual(s) cannot be brought to repentance and restoration, the member shall be subject to church discipline. Those who refuse to deal with their accusations in this manner shall be considered rebellious and divisive.

D. Procedure

1. The pastor(s) and deacon(s) shall act with love and grace but with promptness to seek to restore members who are negligent, in error, quarreling, rebellious, divisive, or who have been accused. If they cannot be brought to repentance and restored to fellowship with Christ and the church, the pastor(s) and deacon(s) may recommend to the church that they be removed from membership.
2. The actions of discipline and, where appropriate, the removal of church members are an integral part of the ministry and Biblical responsibility of the church. Therefore, such action must be based on scriptural principles and is not governed by civil laws or procedures.

No person subject to disciplinary procedures shall have the right to have legal counsel in any meeting, to require that facts be proved, to require any formal cause to be assigned for such action, to due process, or other protections as may be defined by civil law. Such member will be subject solely to the jurisdiction of the appropriate church bodies.

3. The pastor(s), deacon(s), and all other persons of the church membership have a corresponding obligation to conduct or relate to such procedures in a Biblically appropriate manner seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit to preserve the bond of peace and to protect to the greatest extent possible the ministry of the church and all persons involved in any such proceeding.
4. Termination of membership shall be by three-quarters vote of the members present and voting on recommendation of the pastor(s) and deacon(s). Matters of dismissal shall only be considered at any church family meeting. All procedural determinations shall be made by the appropriate body dealing with the matter and those determinations shall be final.
5. Persons who have been removed from the membership of the church shall have no right to make any claim on church property and upon removal shall return any such property in their possession.

E. Restoration

Members who have been removed may be restored to membership by a vote of the church upon a recommendation of the pastor(s) and deacon(s).

Section 5- Termination of Membership

Membership in the church shall be terminated for any of the following:

- A.** Death.
- B.** Written request.

If it appears to the pastor(s) and deacon(s) that a member has requested removal merely to avoid church discipline, that request shall not be granted until the disciplinary process has been properly concluded.

- C.** Letter of recommendation.

Any member in good standing that desires to unite with another church of like faith and order is entitled to a letter of recommendation when a written request is submitted by the church with which he or she is uniting.

- D.** As a disciplinary action under the provisions of Article 4, Section 4.
- E.** Members who are minors may be removed from membership when they reject the submissive responsibility to home or church.

Article V – The Decision-Making Process

Section 1- The Unity of the Spirit

- A.** We commit ourselves to obey the Biblical command to “keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” **Eph. 4:3** By this we do not mean that everyone will always think alike or come to the same conclusion on every issue; but, even with these differences, we must all have a commitment to protecting the unity that has been made between believers by the Holy Spirit.
- B.** We further commit to have a sweet harmonious spirit in our dealing with one another as we are commanded in **Philippians 2:2**. In other words, we must be able to disagree in love. Harmony in spirit will, therefore, be a higher priority than agreement on issues. We will strive to never act apart from it. Harmony in spirit must be evident among the pastor(s), deacon(s), and church body before a decision is made.

Section 2- General Agreement on Issues

- A. God's people are different in many ways: personality, spiritual maturity, insight, and outlook. As differing individuals we must each follow our own conscience and convictions. We cannot expect to agree on every issue. **(Romans 14)**
- B. We will exercise the principle of general agreement in our decision-making process. By this we mean that a decision will be made by the body when the number in agreement exceeds seventy-five percent of those present and voting.

Section 3- The Love Principle

This church shall practice the "love principle" of church government as outlined below:

- A. Every area of church life (ministry, fellowship, and business) shall be governed by the overriding principle of love for one another. **Eph. 4:2**
- B. The principles of church polity as taught in **Philippians 2**:
 - 1. "Be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind...". **vs. 2**
 - 2. "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory...". **vs. 3**
 - 3. "In lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves". **vs. 3c, Rom. 12:10a**
 - 4. The pastor(s), deacon(s), and all members should manifest a servant's attitude. **vss. 5-8**
- C. The Lordship of Christ, not the will of the people, is to be acknowledged and honored. However, the will of the Lord, as determined by the congregation and not in conflict with the Word of God, is the final governmental authority of this church. **Rom. 14:9; Phil. 2:11; I Cor. 12:3; Eph. 1:22, 5:23-24.**

Section 4- Order

We choose not to use "Roberts Rules of Order". We choose rather to follow the clear Biblical injunctions concerning unity, love, peace, and the fruit of the Spirit.

Article VI- Meetings

Section 1- Regular Services

Services shall normally be held each Sunday for the worship of God and edification of believers. Other services including special and midweek services shall be held at the discretion of the pastor(s) and deacon(s).

Section 2- Church Family Meetings

A. Annual Church Family Meeting

The church shall have an Annual Church Family Meeting. This meeting shall normally be held in January on a date and time determined by the pastor(s) and deacon(s). Approval of the church budget, master plan, election of deacons, treasurer, assistant treasurer, and other business as the church deems appropriate shall be addressed at the Annual Church Family Meeting. Notice of the meeting shall be given on two consecutive Sundays prior to the meeting.

B. Quarterly Church Family Meeting

The church shall normally meet quarterly during the months of April, July, and October. The Annual Church Family Meeting shall be the first Quarterly meeting of the year. The time and dates shall be determined by the pastor(s) and deacon(s). Notice of the meeting shall be given on two consecutive Sundays prior to the meeting.

C. Special Church Family Meetings

Special meetings for conducting church family business may be called by the pastor(s) and deacon(s) or by a member who presents his/her request in writing to the pastor(s) and deacon(s). Five members in good standing shall sign such request. The exact matters to be discussed and motions to be made at the meeting must be presented in writing with the request for the meeting. The pastor(s) and deacon(s) shall schedule a meeting within 30 days of the request. Notice of the meeting shall be given and the agenda posted on two consecutive Sundays prior to the meeting.

D. Quorum

A quorum shall consist of the members present and voting.

Article VII- Tax-Exempt Provisions

Section 1- Private Inurement

No part of the net earnings of the church shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons except that the church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for the services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article 1, Section 2 hereof.

Section- 2 Political Involvement

No substantial part of the activities of the church shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. The church shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

Section- 3 Dissolution

Upon the dissolution of the church, the trustees shall, after paying or making provision for payment of all the liabilities of the church, dispose of all of the assets of the church to such organization or organizations formed and operated exclusively for the religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the trustees shall determine. Assets may be distributed only to organizations that agree with the church's Statement of Faith.

Section – 4 Nondiscrimination

The church shall not discriminate against members, applicants, students, or any others on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin.

Section- 5 Limitations of Activities

Notwithstanding any other provision of this constitution, the church shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the purpose stated in Article1, Section 2.

Article VIII- Indemnification of Officers

- A.** The church may choose to indemnify and advance the church related expenses of any officer, employees, or agent of the church.
- B.** Subject to paragraph C of this article, the church may indemnify any pastor, deacon, former pastor, or former deacon of the church against claims, liabilities, expenses, and costs necessarily incurred by him in connection with the defense, compromise, or settlement of any action, suit or proceeding, civil or criminal, in which such person is made a party by reason of being or having been a pastor or deacon to the extent not otherwise compensated, indemnified, or reimbursed by insurance, if:
 - 1.** The conduct of the pastor or deacon was in good faith.
 - 2.** The pastor or deacon reasonably believed that his conduct was in the best interest of the church or at least not opposed to its best interest.
 - 3.** In the case of any criminal proceeding, the pastor or deacon had no reasonable cause to believe that his conduct was unlawful.
- C.** The church may not indemnify any pastor or deacon in connection with a proceeding brought against him by or in the right of the church, in which he was deemed liable to the church or where the pastor or deacon is charged with receiving an improper personal benefit and he is deemed liable on that basis.

Article IX- Designated Contributions

From time to time the church, in the exercise of its religious, educational, and charitable purposes, may establish various funds to accomplish specific goals. Contributors may suggest uses for their contributions but all suggestions shall be deemed advisory rather than mandatory in nature. All contributions made to specific funds or otherwise designated shall remain subject to the exclusive control and discretion of the pastor(s) and deacon(s). No fiduciary obligation shall be created by any designated contribution made to the church other than to use the contribution for the general furtherance of any of the purposes stated in Article 1, Section 2 .

Article X- Binding Arbitration

Section 1- Submission to Arbitration

Believing that lawsuits between believers are prohibited by Scripture, all members of this church agree to submit to binding arbitration on any matters which cannot otherwise be resolved and expressly waive any and all rights in law and equity to bringing any civil disagreement before a court of law, except that judgment upon the award rendered by the arbitrator may be entered in any court having jurisdiction thereof.

Section 2- Notice of Arbitration

In the event of any dispute, claim, question, or disagreement arising out of or relating to this constitution or any other church matter, the parties shall use their best efforts to settle such disputes, claims, questions, or disagreement as befits Christians. To this effect, they shall consult and negotiate with each other in good faith and, recognizing their mutual interest not to disgrace the name of Christ, seek to reach a just and equitable solution.

If they do not reach a solution within a period of sixty (60) days, then upon notice by either party to the other, disputes, claims, questions, or differences shall be finally settled by arbitration as described in Section 1, above and such Procedures for Arbitration as are adopted pursuant to the following two sections.

Section 3- Limitations of Arbitration Decisions

- A.** Should any dispute involve matters of church discipline, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures for church discipline as outlined under Article 5, Section C was followed.
- B.** Should any dispute involve the removal from office of the pastor, assistant pastor, deacon, treasurer, or assistant treasurer the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures set forth in Article 5 were followed.

Section 4- Arbitration Procedures

The procedures for arbitration shall be as determined by the pastor(s) and deacon(s).

Article XI- Missions

Section 1- Finances

The financial basis of the church's missions program shall be Faith Promise Missions. People shall be encouraged to give over and above their tithes and offerings to support worldwide missionary endeavors through the church.

Section 2- Strategy

It shall be the strategy of the church to primarily support missionaries engaged in church planting ministries or those directly supporting church planting ministries.

Section 3- Qualification

All missionaries supported by the church shall be in agreement with the Statement of Faith and Covenant.

Article XII- Interpretation

This Constitution and Bylaws addresses many issues crucial to the orderly and harmonious functioning of the church. It is a man-made document and, therefore, cannot address every issue perfectly and will not be understood the same by all interested parties. When it is subject to interpretation, it should be interpreted in light of the Word of God, the leading and unity of the Holy Spirit, the leading of the pastor(s) and deacon(s), and the leading of the congregation. When progress is impeded over interpretation of the Constitution and Bylaws, it shall be recognized as a document to serve the body not to be served by the body.

Article XIII- Amendments

This Constitution and Bylaws may be revised or amended by a three-quarters vote of the members present and voting at a church family meeting called for this purpose provided that said revision or amendment has been submitted in writing and announced from the pulpit on two consecutive Sundays before said meeting.

Adoption

This Constitution and Bylaws was adopted by a three-quarters majority of the members present and voting at a duly called church family meeting.

This Constitution and Bylaws supersede any other Constitution and Bylaws of Chapel Baptist Church.

Clerk

Date