



Articles of Incorporation Constitution & Bylaws

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Table of Contents

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION / CONSTITUTION

I. Preamble	4
II. Name	4
III. Mission and Vision	4
IV. Articles of Faith	4
4.1 The Baptist Faith and Message (2000).....	4
4.2 The Nashville Statement on Biblical Sexuality	14
V. Covenant	17
VI. Cooperation	18
VII. Membership	18
VIII. Government	18
8.1 Autonomy	18
8.2 Congregationalism.....	18
8.3 Parliamentary Practice	18
8.4 Special Rules	18
IX. Members' Meetings	19
X. Officers	19
XI. Church Year	19
XII. Bylaws	19
XIII. Constitutional Amendments	19

BYLAWS

I. Church Membership	20
1.1 Qualifications.....	20
1.2 Candidacy	20
1.3 Process for Membership.....	20
1.4 Rights	21
1.5 Watchcare.....	21
1.6 Discipline.....	21
1.7 Termination.....	22
II. Church Officers	22
2.1 Treasurer	22
2.2 Trustees.....	22
2.3 Clerk.....	23

III. Deacons	23
3.1 Number, Rotation, and Election	23
3.2 Qualifications.....	23
3.3 Ordination.....	24
3.4 Officers.....	24
3.5 Responsibilities.....	25
3.6 Resignation and Removal.....	25
IV. Staff.....	25
4.1 Purpose and Responsibility	25
4.2 Composition.....	26
4.3 Call and Termination of the Pastor and Ministerial Staff	26
4.4 Salaries and Benefits	27
V. Committees	27
5.1 Standing Committees	27
5.2 Special (Ad Hoc) Committees	28
VI. Ministry Teams.....	29
VII. Ordinances	29
7.1 Baptism.....	29
7.2 The Lord’s Supper.....	29
VIII. Meetings.....	29
8.1 Worship Services.....	29
8.2 Wedding Ceremonies.....	29
IX. Members’ Meetings.....	30
9.1 Regular Members’ Meetings	30
9.2 Called Members’ Meetings.....	30
9.3 Quorum	30
9.4 Parliamentary Rules	30
9.5 Moderator and Succession.....	30
X. Finances.....	30
10.1 Budget.....	30
10.2 Accounting Procedures.....	30
10.3 Fiscal Year	31
XI. Policies and Procedures Manual.....	31
XII. Amendments	31

Articles of Incorporation

Constitution

I. Preamble

That everything may be done “decently and in order” (1 Cor 14:40), that the mission and message of the church may be protected and preserved, that the responsibilities, rights, and privileges of each member shall be made clear, we do hereby establish this constitution and bylaws.

II. Name

This body shall be known as Elkdale Baptist Church. It was incorporated the 8th day of November 1953.

III. Mission and Vision

Mission: To make disciples of Jesus Christ by gathering, growing, giving, and going.

Vision: Changed lives...Real Relationships

IV. Articles of Faith

Elkdale hereby adheres to the Baptist Faith & Message (2000) and the Nashville Statement on Biblical Sexuality (2017).

4.1 - BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE (2000)

I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges

us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

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

II. God

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

A. God the Father

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

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

B. God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before

His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

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

C. God the Holy Spirit

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

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

III. Man

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as

they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

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

IV. Salvation

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

V. God's Purpose of Grace

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

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

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

VI. The Church

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

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

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

VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

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

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

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

VIII. The Lord's Day

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

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

IX. The Kingdom

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

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

X. Last Things

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

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

XI. Evangelism and Missions

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

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

XII. Education

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

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

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

XIII. Stewardship

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

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

XIV. Cooperation

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

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

XV. The Christian and the Social Order

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

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

XVI. Peace and War

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

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

XVII. Religious Liberty

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

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

XVIII. The Family

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

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

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

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to

teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

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

4.2 - NASHVILLE STATEMENT ON BIBLICAL SEXUALITY (2017)

Article 1

WE AFFIRM that God has designed marriage to be a covenantal, sexual, procreative, lifelong union of one man and one woman, as husband and wife, and is meant to signify the covenant love between Christ and his bride the church. WE DENY that God has designed marriage to be a homosexual, polygamous, or polyamorous relationship. We also deny that marriage is a mere human contract rather than a covenant made before God.

Article 2

WE AFFIRM that God's revealed will for all people is chastity outside of marriage and fidelity within marriage. WE DENY that any affections, desires, or commitments ever justify sexual intercourse before or outside marriage; nor do they justify any form of sexual immorality.

Article 3

WE AFFIRM that God created Adam and Eve, the first human beings, in his own image, equal before God as persons, and distinct as male and female. WE DENY that the divinely ordained differences between male and female render them unequal in dignity or worth.

Article 4

WE AFFIRM that divinely ordained differences between male and female reflect God's original creation design and are meant for human good and human flourishing. WE DENY that such differences are a result of the Fall or are a tragedy to be overcome.

Article 5

WE AFFIRM that the differences between male and female reproductive structures are integral to God's design for self-conception as male or female. WE DENY that physical anomalies or psychological conditions nullify the God-appointed link between biological sex and self-conception as male or female.

Article 6

WE AFFIRM that those born with a physical disorder of sex development are created in the image of God and have dignity and worth equal to all other image-bearers. They are acknowledged by our Lord Jesus in his words about "eunuchs who were born that way from their mother's womb." With all others they are welcome as faithful followers of Jesus Christ and should embrace their biological sex insofar as it may be known. WE DENY that ambiguities related to a person's biological sex render one incapable of living a fruitful life in joyful obedience to Christ.

Article 7

WE AFFIRM that self-conception as male or female should be defined by God's holy purposes in creation and redemption as revealed in Scripture. WE DENY that adopting a homosexual or transgender self-conception is consistent with God's holy purposes in creation and redemption.

Article 8

WE AFFIRM that people who experience sexual attraction for the same sex may live a rich and fruitful life pleasing to God through faith in Jesus Christ, as they, like all Christians, walk in purity of life. WE DENY that sexual attraction for the same sex is part of the natural goodness of God's original creation, or that it puts a person outside the hope of the gospel.

Article 9

WE AFFIRM that sin distorts sexual desires by directing them away from the marriage covenant and toward sexual immorality — a distortion that includes both heterosexual and homosexual immorality. WE DENY that an enduring pattern of desire for sexual immorality justifies sexually immoral behavior.

Article 10

WE AFFIRM that it is sinful to approve of homosexual immorality or transgenderism and that such approval constitutes an essential departure from Christian faithfulness and witness. WE DENY that the approval of homosexual immorality or transgenderism is a matter of moral indifference about which otherwise faithful Christians should agree to disagree.

Article 11

WE AFFIRM our duty to speak the truth in love at all times, including when we speak to or about one another as male or female. WE DENY any obligation to speak in such ways that dishonor God's design of his image-bearers as male and female.

Article 12

WE AFFIRM that the grace of God in Christ gives both merciful pardon and transforming power, and that this pardon and power enable a follower of Jesus to put to death sinful desires and to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord. WE DENY that the grace of God in Christ is insufficient to forgive all sexual sins and to give power for holiness to every believer who feels drawn into sexual sin.

Article 13

WE AFFIRM that the grace of God in Christ enables sinners to forsake transgender self-conceptions and by divine forbearance to accept the God-ordained link between one's biological sex and one's self-conception as male or female. WE DENY that the grace of God in Christ sanctions self-conceptions that are at odds with God's revealed will.

Article 14

WE AFFIRM that Christ Jesus has come into the world to save sinners and that through Christ's death and resurrection forgiveness of sins and eternal life are available to every person who repents of sin and trusts in Christ alone as Savior, Lord, and supreme treasure. WE DENY that the Lord's arm is too short to save or that any sinner is beyond his reach.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Gen. 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-24; Ex. 20:14; 20:17; Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Dt. 5:18, 21; 22:5; Jdg. 19:22; 2 Sam. 11:1-12:15; Job 31:1; Ps. 51:1-19; Prov. 5:1-23; 6:20-35; 7:1-27; Isa. 59:1; Mal. 2:14; Matt. 5:27-30; 19:4-6, 8-9, 12; Acts 15:20, 29; Rom. 1:26-27; 1:32; 1 Cor. 6:9-11, 18-20; 7:1-7; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 5:24; Eph. 4:15, 20-24; 5:31-32; Col. 3:5; 1 Thess. 4:3-8; 1 Tim. 1:9-10, 15; 2 Tim. 2:22; Titus 2:11-12; Heb. 13:4; Jas. 1:14-15; 1 Pet. 2:11; Jude 7

V. Covenant

Having been led by the Spirit of God to repent, believe, and receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and having accepted the Bible as our sole authority of faith and practice, we do now, in the presence of God, solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We will commit to **GATHER**, not forsaking assembling together, but will faithfully attend our corporate worship, treasuring our church's weekly opportunity to sing, pray, and receive the whole counsel of God's Word. We will faithfully observe the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. *Heb 10:25, Col 3:16, Rom 6:3-5, 1 Cor 11:23-29*

We will commit to **GROW** as disciples, wishing that all in the congregation mature in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We promise, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to forsake the paths of sin and to walk in the ways of holiness all the days of our lives. In Christian love and watchfulness, we desire to give and receive instruction with meekness and affection. We will rejoice at each other's happiness and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear each other's burdens and sorrows. *(1 Pet 3:18, Eph 4:22-24, Titus 2:11-14, Rom 12:15)*

We will commit to **GIVE** sacrificially of our time, talents, and treasure to serve one another. We will contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry and the expenses of the church. We will use our spiritual gifts and talents to serve one another selflessly and to aid in the work of the church to make disciples. *(Matt 6:19-21, 1 Cor 12:3-11, 16:1-4, Phil 2:1-4)*

We will commit to **GO** from our assembly with the good news of Jesus Christ. We will be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior, desiring that none should perish but that all would be saved. *(Matt 28:18-20, Acts 1:8)*

We will willingly follow the pastoral leadership of the church, recognizing that the pastors have been called by God to serve, care for, and equip this body by teaching the Word of Christ and modeling the character of Christ before us. We will affirm the deacons as leading servants in the church. If we move from this local body, we will, as soon as possible, unite with another local church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant. *(Acts 20:27-28, Heb 13:17)*

VI. Cooperation

Believing in the spirit of cooperation among Baptist bodies, this church will cooperate with and help promote the work of the West Central Baptist Association, the Alabama Baptist State Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

VII. Membership

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership. Procedures for admission, dismissal, and transfer shall be as provided by the bylaws of the church.

VIII. Government

8.1 - Autonomy

This is an autonomous Baptist church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all aspects of church life.

8.2 - Congregationalism

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

8.3 - Parliamentary Practice

Robert's Rules of Order (current edition) shall be the parliamentary authority for this church and for all its organizations, departments, committees, etc.

8.4 - Special Rules

The church may adopt special rules which are not in conflict with this constitution or generally accepted parliamentary practice.

IX. Members' Meetings

The bylaws of the church shall provide for regularly scheduled meetings and for the calling of special meetings for the transaction of special business. The quorum required for the transaction of business shall be as provided in the bylaws of the church.

X. Officers

The church shall elect and discharge officers at such time and in such manner as provided in the bylaws.

XI. Church Year

The church year shall extend from the first day of January to the last day of December and repeat each year thereafter.

XII. Bylaws

The church shall adopt bylaws for the purpose of clarifying further governance of its affairs.

XIII. Constitutional Amendments

Changes in the Constitution may be made at any regular members' meeting of the church provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous members' meeting and copies of the proposed amendment shall have been furnished to each member present at the earlier meeting. Amendments to the Constitution shall be by three-fourths positive vote of those church members present and voting.

Bylaws

I. Membership

1.1 - Qualifications

The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of 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.

1.2 - Candidacy

Any person may offer him/herself as a candidate for membership in this church in any of the following ways:

1. Those who make an initial profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and express their desire to identify with Christ and His Church through the act of believer's baptism.
2. Those who transfer their letter of membership from another Southern Baptist Church.
3. Those Christian believers who have been baptized by immersion and who come by statement of their salvation experience.
4. Those Christian believers from another denomination who come for baptism by immersion as a witness to their understanding of and adherence to our Articles of Faith as listed in the church Constitution.
5. Those who make a profession of faith but for whom baptism might prove physically harmful.

1.3 - Process for Membership

Before being accepted as a member, each candidate for membership shall:

1. complete a membership class.
2. meet with one of the pastors to discuss conversion experience and church membership.
3. affirm and demonstrate his or her support and submission to the church's constitution and bylaws.
4. sign the church covenant.

When these steps are complete, the pastors will present prospective members to the church for affirmation or denial.

1.4 - Rights

1. Each church member is eligible for consideration by the membership as a candidate for elective office according to the policies of this church.
2. The church member that is present during members' meetings is entitled to vote on matters that require a decision of the church body.

1.5 - Watchcare

Watchcare simply means that a saved person will be loved and cared for as a member of the church. Upon completion of steps 1-3 of the membership process (Article 1.3), the candidate will enjoy all the benefits of membership with the exceptions of voting in members' meetings and election as a church officer.

1. *Adults* - Watchcare membership for any baptized believer age 16 or older may be appropriate in the case of a person who is temporarily associating with our church due to work or school, but who expects to return to his or her home church or relocate to a new city in the reasonably near future.
2. *Children* - We believe that regeneration is a work of God's Holy Spirit in the life of a person previously dead in their sin. While we rejoice that God often regenerates people at an early age, we believe it is wise to walk slowly with a child as he/she experiences salvation and fellowship with Christ and His Church.

Any believer under 16 years old will remain under watchcare of the church body and his/her parents or guardians. Those minors who are at least 16 years old and have professed faith in Christ and followed Him in believer's baptism may then walk through the process for becoming a member of the church as described in Article 1.3 hereof.

1.6 - Discipline

The church shall practice discipline among its membership in the following three ways:

1. *Reconciliation* - It shall be the practice of this church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The pastoral staff and deacons are available for counsel and guidance. The attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption rather than punishment (Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1-2).
2. *Removal* - If efforts to foster repentance and reconciliation prove unsuccessful, a member may be removed from membership for persisting in unrepentant sin or

as a result of a 12-month period of inactivity. The removal process is described in Article 1.7 hereof.

3. *Restoration* - The church may restore to membership any person previously removed, upon request of the removed person, and upon evidence of the removed person's repentance and completion of the membership process.

1.7 - Termination

Membership shall be terminated for any of the following reasons:

1. death of the member,
2. transfer of membership to another Baptist church or other like-minded church for those members who are in good standing,
3. relocation to a church of a different denomination. In this case, the pastor may, at his discretion, provide a certificate of Christian character,
4. removal by three-fourths vote in a regularly called members' meeting as an act of church discipline due to unrepentant sin or inactivity (Article 1.6).

II. Officers

The officers of this church shall be the ministerial staff, deacons, treasurer, trustees, clerk, and assistant clerk.

2.1 - Treasurer

The treasurer will be affirmed annually upon nomination by the Nominating Committee for a one-year term and may succeed himself/herself twice. The treasurer must be a faithful giver and may be subject to a credit check prior to serving.

The treasurer shall have the responsibility of primary oversight of financial receipts and disbursements in accordance with the church-approved budget and other financial obligations.

The treasurer shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Stewardship Committee without voting privileges.

2.2 - Trustees

Trustees shall be affirmed by the church upon nomination by the Nominating Committee. This body shall be composed of six trustees who shall rotate on a three-year basis, two members being nominated and elected each year.

The trustees shall be empowered to execute deeds, deeds of trust, mortgages, liens, promissory notes, or other financial obligations and to transfer, assign, and convey all church property or any part thereof upon officially recorded instructions of the church in business session. Such instruments, when so directed by the church, shall be signed and/or attested by any two trustees.

2.3 - Clerk

The clerk and an assistant will be affirmed annually upon nomination by the Nominating Committee. The clerk shall keep an accurate record of all church business and submit this record for approval of the church. All church records are church property. Therefore, a copy of such records shall remain in possession of the church office at all times.

III. Deacons

3.1 - Number, Rotation, and Election

The deacon body shall be made up of fifteen men (if enough qualified men are available within the church), with a rotating system in which each year one-third are elected to serve a three-year team. The duties and qualifications of the deacons shall be those prescribed by the New Testament.

Deacon nominations and elections shall follow the process in the Policies and Procedures Manual. When a deacon has served for more than one year, he shall not be eligible for re-election until at least one year has passed. Vacancies between elections among active deacons shall not be filled unless the amount of vacancies totals three or more at any one time.

Any member who has served as a deacon may, due to age or infirmity, be elected by the church to the role of deacon emeritus.

3.2 - Qualifications

The following should be true of any man serving in the office of deacon:

1. He should not be a new convert or member of the ministerial staff. He must be a mature believer who is at least 21 years of age and a member of Elkdale Baptist Church for at least one year. (*1 Tim 3:6*)
2. He should live a life led by the Holy Spirit. This should be evident in his language, actions, and relationships. (*Acts 6:3*)

3. He should have a reputation of respect and integrity among both the congregation where he worships and community where he lives. (*Acts 6:3; 1 Tim 3:8*)
4. He should have nothing to do with sinful criticism or gossip. His words should be truthful and edifying to anyone inside or outside of the church. (*1 Tim 3:8*)
5. He should be a faithful steward of his time, talents, and treasure. His time should be managed so he can lead the church in service and attendance. His gifts should be used to strengthen the church. His giving to the church should begin with 10% of his income (the tithe) and grow from there. (*Mal 3:10; 1 Cor 16:2; 2 Cor 8:7; 1 Tim 3:8*)
6. He should be a “one-woman man.” His life should be characterized by sexual purity. If he is single, he must practice sexual abstinence. If he is married, the pattern of his married life must be one of uncompromising faithfulness to his wife. (*1 Tim 3:12*)
7. He should be the spiritual leader of his home and manage his family in a way that reflects the love of Christ and obedience to the Word of God. (*1 Tim 3:12*)
8. If he is married, his wife should be faithful in her walk with God and supportive of the ministry of her husband and the church. Her speech should be encouraging and edifying to the church. (*1 Tim 3:11*)
9. He should be a man of self-control keeping his body clean and pure of anything that would hinder or damage the testimony of his faith and his church. (*1 Tim 3:8*)
10. Finally, he should be a man who loves to serve and desires to tell people about the love of Jesus Christ with his words and his actions. (*Matt 28:18-20*)

3.3 - Ordination

Deacon ordination is a worship service in which the church affirms a man to serve in the role of deacon by the laying on of hands. In this service, the congregation communicates a recognition and affirmation of God’s call upon this person. The congregation asks God to bless this individual in this calling and pledges its prayerful support and encouragement.

3.4 - Officers

After the election of new deacons for the coming year, the new body of deacons shall meet to elect the chairman, vice-chairman, secretary, and other officers as it deems necessary. The chairman may succeed himself once. Neither chairman nor vice-chairman shall serve concurrently as Treasurer or chairman of the following committees: Nominating, Personnel, Building and Grounds, Missions, and Stewardship.

3.5 - Responsibilities

In accordance with the meaning of the work and the practice in the New Testament, deacons are to:

1. Be faithful in working toward and praying for the unity and ministry of the church.
2. Serve alongside the pastor in carrying out the mission of the church.
3. Be diligent in the search for physical and spiritual needs and serve the church membership in a manner that would give aid, comfort, peace, and encouragement.
4. Assist in observance of the Lord's Supper.
5. Present the names of Nominating Committee candidates to the church for election.
6. Be faithful to participate in worship services, members' meetings, deacons' meetings and retreats.
7. At least one member of the active deacon body will serve on each of the following committees: Nominating, Personnel, Building and Grounds, Missions, and Stewardship.

3.6 - Resignation and Removal

A deacon may tender his written resignation at any meeting of the deacon body. The call for a deacon's removal prior to completion of his term, should evidence warrant, shall be resolved by the active deacons and pastoral staff.

IV. Staff

4.1 - Purpose and Responsibility

The church staff is responsible for leading the membership to function in accordance with the New Testament. The pastor is responsible for leading the membership, the organizations and the church staff.

4.2 - Composition

The church staff shall consist of the pastor and the other staff as designated by the membership. The Personnel Committee shall provide job descriptions to all church staff members.

1. The pastor shall:
 - A. faithfully preach the Word of God.
 - B. lead the church in the pursuit of its vision and mission.
 - C. be diligent in the search for physical and spiritual needs and serve the church membership in a manner that would give aid, comfort, peace, and encouragement.
 - D. lead the ministerial staff and serve as an ex-officio member of each committee without voting privileges.
2. The ministerial staff shall be called and employed as the church determines the need for such offices.
3. Support staff (non-ministerial) members shall be employed as the church determines the need for their services. The church personnel committee shall have the authority to employ and to terminate services of support staff members. Such employment and termination of services shall be with the recommendation of the supervising staff member, related committees, and the personnel committee.

4.3 - Call and Termination of the Pastor and Ministerial Staff

A pastor or a ministerial staff person shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. The election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, for which at least one week's public notice has been given to the membership.

A minister-search committee, nominated by the deacons, shall be affirmed by the church to seek out a suitable pastor or ministerial staff person. The recommendation of this committee will constitute a nomination. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one name at a time. The candidate shall be affirmed by ballot with a three-fourths positive vote.

The pastor or ministerial staff person, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by their request or the church's request.

The pastor or ministerial staff person may relinquish the office by giving at least a two-week notice to the church at the time of resignation. The deacons and personnel

committee may, by mutual agreement, waive the requirement for notice. Such agreement shall be in writing and shall be signed by the pastor or ministerial staff person, the chairman of deacons and the chairman of the Personnel Committee.

The church may declare the office of pastor or ministerial staff person to be vacant. Such action shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, for which at least one week's notice has been given. The meeting may be called upon the recommendation of a majority of both the Personnel Committee and the deacons. The vote to declare the office vacant shall be conducted by ballot with a three-fourths' positive vote. Except in instances of gross misconduct, the church will compensate with two weeks' pay.

4.4 - Salaries and Benefits

The Personnel Committee, in consultation with the Stewardship committee, shall set the initial salaries of the pastor and ministerial staff. Initial salaries of newly formed support staff positions will be set by the Personnel Committee in consultation with the Stewardship committee. Initial salaries of vacant support staff positions shall be set by the Personnel Committee providing it is in conformity with the current budget.

V. Committees

All who serve on church committees shall be members of this church. Committee Chairpersons and members shall be recommended by the Nominating Committee for affirmation by the church. Chairpersons may serve a one-year term and may succeed themselves once. The duties and responsibilities of committees are specified in the Policies and Procedures Manual.

5.1 - Standing Committees

The standing committees of this church shall be as follows: Nominating, Personnel, Building and Grounds, Missions, Stewardship and such other committees as the church shall authorize. Additional committees may be added by the amendment procedure prescribed within these Bylaws.

1. The Nominating Committee coordinates the staffing of all church officers and standing committees. This committee shall be composed of six members whose names shall be brought by the deacons to the church for approval. These six members shall serve on a three-year rotation with one-third of the members to be affirmed each year. The chairperson of the Nominating Committee shall be named by the deacons.

2. The Personnel Committee assists the church in matters related to personnel administration, including both ministerial and non-ministerial staff. Their responsibilities include: determining staffing needs, employment, salaries, benefits, other compensation, policies, job descriptions and other personnel administration. This committee shall consist of six church members. Members of this committee shall serve on a three-year rotation with one-third to be affirmed each year.
3. The Building and Grounds Committee assists the church in matters related to properties maintenance and upkeep. Its work includes maintaining all church properties for ready use and recommending policies regarding use of properties. This committee shall consist of six church members. Members of this committee shall serve on a three-year rotation with one-third to be affirmed each year.
4. The Missions Committee assists the church in developing and promoting the church's missions strategy as specified in Acts 1:8. This committee shall consist of six church members. Members of this committee shall serve on a three-year rotation with one-third to be affirmed each year.
5. The Stewardship Committee leads in the development of the annual church budget, oversees the daily work of the treasurer, and promotes faithful giving among the church membership. The committee also makes decisions regarding deviations from the regular budget implementation during the course of the year in accordance with church policy. This committee shall consist of six church members. Members of this committee shall serve on a three-year rotation with one-third to be affirmed each year. Members must be faithful givers and may be subject to a credit check prior to serving.

5.2 - Special (Ad Hoc) Committees

The Special (Ad Hoc) committees of this church shall include such other committees as the church shall authorize. Additional Special (Ad Hoc) committees may be formed as needed and consist of at least six members. Nominations shall come from the deacon body and be affirmed by the church in a members' meeting. Members of Special (Ad Hoc) committees shall continue on a non-rotation basis until the task assigned is complete. Special (Ad Hoc) committees may be disbanded by three-fourths majority vote of the church in a members' meeting.

VI. Ministry Teams

The church shall form ministry teams for the purpose of leading official ministries within the church. The duties and responsibilities of Ministry Teams are specified in the Policies and Procedures Manual.

VII. Ordinances

7.1 - Baptism

This church shall receive for baptism any person whose profession of saving faith in Jesus Christ has been affirmed by a minister of Elkdale Baptist Church.

1. Baptism shall be by immersion in water (except as noted in 7.1.4).
2. The pastor, or whomever the deacons shall authorize, shall administer baptism.
3. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service of the church.
4. Baptism may be administered as an act of worship in the home, hospital or nursing home when health prevents the candidate from attending a regular worship service. It may be omitted altogether if baptism is deemed harmful to the candidate's health.

7.2 - The Lord's Supper

The church shall observe the Lord's Supper regularly. The ministerial staff and deacons shall administer the Lord's Supper.

VIII. Meetings

8.1 - Worship Services

The church shall meet regularly each week for corporate worship. Special services or other church meetings shall be placed on the church calendar as needed.

8.2 - Wedding Ceremonies

The church shall sanction wedding ceremonies for the purpose of uniting one man to one woman in marriage.

IX. Members' Meetings

9.1 - Regular Members' Meetings

The church shall hold at least four regularly scheduled members' meetings during the course of one year.

9.2 - Called Members' Meetings

The church may conduct a called members' meeting to consider matters of special nature and significance. One-week notice must be given for a specially called members' meeting unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical. The notice shall include the subject, the date, and the time and place, and it must be given in such a manner that all resident members have opportunity to know of the meeting.

9.3 - Quorum

The quorum consists of those members who attend the church members' meeting, provided it is a regularly scheduled meeting or one that has been properly called.

9.4 - Parliamentary Rules

Robert's Rules of Order (current edition) is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure on all church business during members' meetings.

9.5 - Moderator and Succession

The moderator shall be the Chairman of the deacons, and in his absence, the Vice Chairman of the deacons. In the absence of both, the pastor may choose to moderate or appoint an active deacon.

X. Finances

10.1 - Budget

The Stewardship Committee, along with the Chairmen of the Building and Grounds, Personnel, and Missions committees, shall prepare and submit to the deacons for approval a budget as specified by the church policy. The budget will then be submitted to the church and may be approved by three-fourths' positive vote of those church members present and voting.

10.2 - Accounting Procedures

Receipt of all funds for any and all purposes shall be properly recorded on the books of the church by the accountant. Those involved in actual handling of funds shall be

bonded for an amount that would equal the offering of any given Sunday, with the church paying the bond.

10.3 - Fiscal Year

The church fiscal year shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31.

XI. Policies and Procedures Manual

The church shall develop and maintain a Policies and Procedures Manual. The manual shall be kept in possession of the church office and made available for use there by any member of the church. The deacons shall review the manual periodically with authority to recommend changes for the church to consider.

Policies and procedures may be added, revised or deleted by:

1. the recommendation of the deacons or organization to whose areas of assignment the policy relates,
2. approval by the deacons, and
3. approval by the church.

XII. Amendments

Changes in the bylaws may be made at any regular members' meeting providing the amendment has been presented in writing at a previous members' meeting and made publicly available. Amendments to the bylaws shall be approved by three-fourths positive vote of those church members present and voting.