

# BYLAWS OF UNION HILL BAPTIST CHURCH

## I. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

### **Section 1. General: Qualifications and Procedures**

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the lordship of Jesus Christ. 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.

The membership of the church shall consist of those persons who profess their faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, giving satisfactory proof of conversion to the Christian faith as set forth in the New Testament, who have petitioned the said church for membership and have been accepted by two thirds of the members of said church present and voting at the time of the reception of such members, and who have enjoyed the ordinance of believers baptism, and have indicated their commitment, following the teachings of the Bible as their model and standard of living.

### **Section 2. Candidacy**

Any person may offer himself as a candidate for membership in this church. All such candidates shall be presented to the church at any regular church service for membership in any of the following ways according to the policies of this church:

- 1) By baptism:
  - a. For persons making a public profession of faith.
  - b. For persons who have experienced salvation but have not experienced believers' baptism by immersion in a Baptist church.
- 2) By letter:
  - a. Promise of letter of recommendation from another Baptist church.
- 3) By statement of faith:
  - a. For persons who have experienced salvation followed by believer's baptism by immersion in another Baptist church, but are either not now Baptist, or no record is now available.
  - b. For restoration upon a statement of repentance and rededication of persons who have been removed from the fellowship of a Baptist church for reasons of discipline.

A two-thirds vote of those church members present and voting shall be required to accept such candidates as members. They will be considered under watch-care until baptism or receipt of church letter.

If there is any dissent as to any candidate, such dissent shall be referred to the Deacons for investigation and the making of a recommendation to the church within thirty (30) days. A two-thirds vote of those church members present and voting shall be required to accept such candidates to membership.

### **Section 3. New Member Orientation**

New members of this church are expected to participate in the church's new member orientation according to the policies of this church.

### **Section 4. Rights of Members**

- 1) Every member of this church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference.
- 2) Every member of this church is eligible for consideration by the membership as candidates for elective offices in the church according to the policies of this church.
- 3) Every member of the church may participate in the ordinances of the church as administered by the church according to the policies of this church.

### **Section 5. Termination of Membership**

Membership shall be terminated according to the policies of this church in the following ways: (1) death of a member, (2) dismission to another Baptist church, (3) exclusion by action of this church, or (4) proof of membership in a church of another denomination.

### **Section 6. Conflict Resolution**

This church is committed to resolving in a biblical manner all conflict that may arise within the body. This commitment is based on God's command that Christians should strive to live at peace with one another (see Matt 5:9; John 17:20-23; Romans 12:18; Eph. 4:1-3) and that when disputes arise, Christians should resolve them according to the principles set forth in Scripture (see Prov. 19:11; Matt 5:23-25; 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 6:1-8; Gal. 6:1). We believe that these commands and principles are an obligation to every Christian and are essential to the unity, health, and witness of the church.

When a member of this church has a conflict with, or is concerned about the behavior of another member, he/she shall attempt to resolve it in the following manner.

- (1) The offended or concerned person shall prayerfully examine himself/herself, and take responsibility for their contribution to the problem (Matt. 7:3-5), and shall prayerfully seek to

- discern whether the offense is so serious it cannot be overlooked (Prov. 19:11; 15:18; 17:14; 20:3; Eph. 4:2; Col. 3:13; 1 Pet. 4:8).
- (2) If the offense is too serious to be overlooked, the offended party shall go, several times if necessary, and attempt to resolve the matter personally and privately. In this interaction the offended party shall quickly confess his/her own wrongdoing and seek forgiveness.
- (3) If the offender will not listen and if the problem is too serious to overlook, the offended person shall return with one or two mature Christian people to help in the resolution of the differences. These other people are to serve more as mediators than as champions of a side. These other people should preferably be recognized leaders in the church or trained Christian mediators from the associational or denominational structure.
- At the request of either party to the dispute, the church leadership shall make every effort to assist in resolving the differences and affecting reconciliation.
- (4) Before the matter is taken to the congregation according to the directed procedure of Matt. 18:15-17, the congregational leaders should seek counsel and mediation assistance from the association, the state convention, the office of LeaderCare at LifeWay, or a recognized ministry of Christian conciliation such as Peacemakers Ministries.

## **Section 7. Discipline**

- 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 pastor, other members of the church 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) **Exclusion** – Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, the pastor and the deacons will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accord with Matthew 18. If it becomes necessary for the church to take action to exclude a member, a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting is required; and the church may proceed to declare the person to be no longer in the membership of the church. A spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance shall pervade all such proceedings.
- 3) **Restoration** – The church may restore to membership any person previously excluded, upon request of the excluded person, and upon evidence of the excluded person's repentance and reformation. Such restoration shall be by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting.

## **II. CHURCH OFFICERS**

### **Section 1. Trustees**

The church shall elect three or more trustees to serve as legal officers for the church. Upon a specific vote of the church authorizing each action, they shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage,

lease, or transfer any church property. When the signatures of trustees are required, they shall sign legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property, or other legal documents related to church-approved matters.

Trustees shall be elected annually for three (3) year terms, with one to be elected annually as that term expires. A trustee may succeed himself.

## **Section 2. Moderator**

The pastor shall serve as moderator. In the absence of the pastor, the chairman of deacons shall preside. In the absence of both, the clerk shall call the church to order and preside for the election of an acting moderator.

## **Section 3. Clerk**

The church shall elect annually a clerk as its clerical officer. The clerk shall be responsible for supervising the keeping of a suitable record of all official actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. The clerk shall be responsible for the keeping of a register of names of members, with dates of admission, dismissal, death, or erasure, together with a record of baptisms. The clerk shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church, preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give required notice of all meetings where notice is necessary, as indicated in these bylaws. The clerk shall be responsible for preparing the annual profile of the church to the association.

The church may delegate some or all of the clerical responsibilities to a secretary who will assist the elected clerk. All church records are the church property and shall be kept in the church facilities.

## **Section 4. Parliamentarian**

The church shall annually elect a parliamentarian. If that person is not present when needed an acting parliamentarian may be elected. Roberts Rules of Order will be followed.

## **Section 5. Church Treasurer**

The church shall elect annually a church treasurer as its financial officer. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out (upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel), all money or things of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the church at each regular business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements of the preceding month. The treasurer's report and records shall be audited annually by an auditing committee or public accountant. The treasurer shall be bonded, the church paying the bond.

Upon rendering the annual account at the end of each fiscal year and its acceptance and approval by the church, the records shall be delivered by the treasurer to the church clerk, who shall keep and preserve the account as a part of the permanent records of the church.

### **III. DEACONS**

#### **Section 1. Qualifications**

The office of Deacon is an office of service to Christ through the church. Any other concept does injustice to the New Testament record (Acts 6 and 1 Timothy 3). It is not a position or office to give a person in order to honor him. A member, in order to qualify for the office of Deacon in Union Hill Baptist Church:

1. Shall give evidence of a Spirit-filled life (Ephesians 5:18).
2. Shall be affirmed by the church (Acts 6:3).
3. Shall set a high standard of separated Christian living; for example, shall not drink alcoholic beverages, smoke or attend questionable places of amusement (1 Timothy 4:12).
4. Shall be active and faithful to all major areas of church life (Hebrews 10:25).
5. Shall not be a gossiper (1 Timothy 3:8).
6. Shall believe in and practice "storehouse tithing" (Malachi 3:10).
7. Shall have compassion for the lost, and seek in his living and speech to win them to the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 3:13).
8. If married, neither the husband nor wife shall have been divorced (1 Timothy 3:11,12).
9. Must believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of God, without error, the source of authority for precept and practice (2 Timothy 3:16).
10. Must rule his children and his own house well (1 Timothy 3:12).
11. Must believe in salvation by grace, through faith, on the basis of the substitutionary death of Christ for sinners (John 3:16).
12. Shall do all in his power to create and preserve harmony in the church (Proverbs 6:19).
13. Shall be able to keep, and have the reputation for keeping, in confidence those things which should not be discussed with others (James 3:5).
14. Shall recognize the God-given spiritual leadership that is incumbent upon the office of a pastor and seek to serve under that leadership (1 Peter 5:1-4).
15. Shall have been a member of Union Hill Baptist Church for at least two years before his recommendation to the Deacon body (1 Timothy 3:10).

#### **Section 2. Nomination, Election**

1. Members of the church will be given opportunity to nominate up to four men on forms provided and at the time set for such business. At least two weeks notice shall be given for the time of nomination.
2. Secret ballot cast by the membership will be assembled and counted by the Deacons.
3. The men obtaining the most nominations will be screened by the Deacons, and the top two who meet the requirements of the church will be interviewed.

4. If, following the interview, the nominee will accept the office of Deacon, their name will be presented to the church for election in a church conference for which two weeks notice has been given.
5. Upon vote of the church they will serve as Deacons at the will of the congregation.
6. If they have been previously ordained by a Baptist Church, that ordination will be valid. If unordained at the time of election, the Pastor and Deacons will immediately provide opportunity for their ordination.

### **Section 3. Number of Deacons and Term of Office:**

1. Union Hill Baptist Church will have ~~eighteen~~ fourteen<sup>1</sup> active Deacons. This number may be changed anytime by vote of the church in conference.
2. A Deacon shall serve when elected until he moves, withdraws fellowship, moves membership from the church, or is deceased.
3. When a vacancy occurs in the Deacon body, the church shall call for an election of Deacon following prescribed procedure.
4. A Deacon may be declared inactive at his request.

### **Section 4. Officers**

The deacons shall annually elect a chairman, vice chairman, secretary, and others, as deemed necessary.

### **Section 5. Responsibilities**

In accordance with the meaning of the work and the practice in the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. Their task is to serve with the pastor and staff in performing the pastoral ministries tasks of (1) leading the church in the achievement of its mission, (2) proclaiming the gospel to believers and unbelievers, and (3) caring for the church's members and other persons in the community.

### **Section 6. Meetings**

The deacons shall hold regular deacons meetings as designated by church policy.

---

<sup>1</sup> Amended to change eighteen to fourteen. Amendment proposed in February 2011, passed March 13, 2011.

## **IV. CHURCH STAFF**

### **Section 1. Purpose and Responsibility**

The church staff is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. The pastor is responsible for leading the congregation, the ministry organizations, and the church staff to perform their tasks.

### **Section 2. Composition**

The church staff shall consist of the pastor and other staff as designated by church policy.

- (1) The pastor is leader of pastoral ministries in the church. As such he works with the deacons and church staff to: 1) lead the church in the achievement of its mission, 2) proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers, and 3) care for the church's members and other persons in the community. The church shall provide a job description to aid in the understanding of these tasks.
- (2) The pastoral staff shall be called and employed as the church determines the need for such offices. A job description shall be written when the need for a staff member is determined. Those staff members of whom the church requires evidence of a personal call of God to minister shall be recommended to the church by the personnel committee and called by church action.
- (3) Ministerial staff shall be called and employed to assist the pastoral staff as the church determines the need for such offices. A job description shall be written when the need for a staff member is determined. Those staff members of whom the church requires evidence of a personal call of God to minister shall be recommended to the church by the personnel committee and called by church action.
- (4) Support staff (non-ministerial staff) members shall be employed as needed. The church personnel committee shall recommend to the church the employment or termination of any staff member. Such employment and termination of services shall be with the recommendation of the supervising staff member and, as appropriate, with the consultation of related committees of the church.

### **Section 3. Call and Termination of the Pastor**

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

A pastor selection committee shall be elected by the church to seek out a suitable pastor, and its recommendations will constitute a nomination. Any church member has the privilege of making other nominations according to the policy established by the church. The committee shall bring to the

consideration of the church only one name at a time. Election shall be by ballot, an affirmative vote of two-thirds of those present and voting being necessary for a call. The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or the church's request. He shall preside at meetings of this church, and if so designated may serve as moderator in all business meetings in keeping with the rules of order authorized in these bylaws.

The pastor may relinquish the office as pastor by giving at least two weeks' notice to the church at the time of resignation.

If the termination is at the church's request, the church may declare the office of pastor to be vacant. Such action shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's notice has been given. The meeting may be called upon the recommendation of a majority of the personnel committee or the deacons or by written petition signed by not less than one fourth of the resident church members (as numbered in the most recent associational minutes). The moderator for this meeting shall be an outside person (the director of missions or a representative of the Office of LeaderCare and Church Administration of the State Board of Missions) or failing that, a person designated by the members present by majority vote, and he shall be someone other than the pastor. The vote to declare the office vacant shall be by secret ballot; an affirmative vote of a majority of the members present and voting being necessary to declare the office vacant. Except in instances of gross misconduct by the pastor so excluded from office, the church will compensate the pastor no more than three months compensation.

The pastor and church may, by mutual agreement, waive the requirement for notice. Such agreement shall be in writing and shall be signed by the pastor, the chairman of deacons and the chairman of the personnel committee.

#### **Section 4. Call and Termination of Members of the Pastoral Staff and Ministerial Staff**

The pastoral staff and ministerial staff shall be called or employed as the church determines the need for such offices. A job description shall be written when the need for a pastoral staff or ministerial staff member is determined. All pastoral staff and ministerial staff members shall be recommended to the church by the personnel committee and called by church action.

At the time of resignation at least two weeks notice shall be given to the church. If the termination is the church's choice, the church may vote to vacate such positions upon recommendation of the personnel committee, such termination being immediate. The staff member and church may, by mutual agreement, waive the requirement for notice. Such agreement shall be in writing and shall be signed by the staff member, the pastor, the chairman of deacons and the chairman of the personnel committee.

### **V. CHURCH COUNCIL**

The Church Council shall serve the church by leading in planning, coordinating, conducting, and evaluating the ministries and programs of the church and its organizations.



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

Regular members of the Church Council shall be the pastor, other staff members, program/organization directors, chairman of deacons, church officers, and committee chairpersons.

All matters agreed upon by the council which call for action not already approved shall be referred to the church for approval or disapproval.

## **VI. CHURCH COMMITTEES OR TEAMS**

All who serve on church committees shall be members of this church. All church committee members shall be recommended by the church nominating committee and elected by the church unless otherwise specified within these bylaws.

### **Section 1. Administrative Committees or Administrative Teams**

The administrative committee of this church shall include a nominating committee, a personnel committee, a church property and space committee, a stewardship committee and such other administrative committees as the church shall authorize. Additional administrative committees may be added by the amendment procedure prescribed within these bylaws.

- (1) The church nominating committee coordinates the staffing of all church leadership positions filled by volunteer workers unless otherwise specified herein. This committee is appointed by the pastor and may include directors of programs/organizations. Persons considered for any such positions shall be approved by the nominating committee before they are approached for recruitment. The nominating committee shall annually present a slate of workers to the church for approval. This committee shall also fill vacancies as they occur throughout the year.
- (2) The church personnel committee assists the church in matters related to employed personnel administration, including those called by church action. Their work included such areas as determining staff needs, employment, salaries, benefits, other compensation, policies, job descriptions, and personnel services.
- (3) The church property and space committee assists the church in matters related to property administration. Its work includes such areas as maintaining all church properties for ready use, recommending policies regarding use of properties, consulting with the personnel committee and the church staff regarding the needs for, and the employment of maintenance personnel, and regarding the assignment of supervisory responsibility to appropriate personnel.

- (4) The church stewardship committee develops and recommends an overall stewardship development plan, a unified church budget, and budget subscription plans. It advises and recommends in administering use of all church donations received, using sound principles of financial management. It works with the treasurer in the preparation and presentation to the church of required reports regarding the financial affairs of the church.

## **Section 2. Regular (Standing) Committees**

The regular (standing) committees of this church shall include such other committees as the church shall authorize. Additional regular committees may be added by the amendment to church policy.

## **Section 3. Special Committees**

The special committees shall include such other committees as the church authorizes and may be added by appointment of the pastor. They shall serve until the task assigned is complete, and may be disbanded by majority vote in church conference.

## **Section 4. Councils or Teams**

The church shall maintain councils as specified by church policy. [*These councils may include such things as evangelism council, missions development council, age-group councils, and any others as specified by church policy.*] All councils related to the church programs (ministries) shall be under church control, all members serving by virtue of offices to which they are elected by the church, reporting regularly to the church, and all program activities subject to church coordination and approval. Additional administrative committees may be added by the amendment procedure prescribed within these bylaws. Members of councils committees shall serve by virtue of the office they hold as specified by church policy.

## **VII. CHURCH MINISTRY (PROGRAM) ORGANIZATIONS**

The church shall maintain ministries (programs) as specified by church policy. These ministries (programs) may include such things as Bible teaching, church member training, church leader training, new member orientation, mission education, mission action, mission support, music education, music training, and music performance. All organizations related to the church ministries (programs) shall be under church control, all officers being elected by the church and reporting regularly to the church, and all program activities subject to church coordination and approval. The church shall provide the human resources, the physical resources, and the financial resources for the appropriate advancement of these programs.

## **VIII. CHURCH EMPHASIS MINISTRIES (PROGRAMS)**

The church shall maintain emphasis ministries (programs) for the purpose of enriching extending the ministries and programs of the church. These shall be established as specified by church policy. All organizations related to the church emphasis ministries (programs) shall be under church control, all

officers being elected by the church and reporting regularly to the church, and all program activities subject to church coordination and approval.

## **IX. CHURCH ORDINANCES**

### **Section 1. Baptism**

This church shall receive for baptism any person who has received Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith, who professes him publicly at any worship service, and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord.

- (1) Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
- (2) The pastor or whomever the church shall authorize shall administer baptism. The deacons or baptism committee shall assist in the preparation and observance of baptism.
- (3) Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service of the church. When health prevents the candidate from attending a regular worship service, the baptism may be administered as an act or worship in the home, hospital, or nursing home.
- (4) A person who professes faith in Christ and is not baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by the pastor, staff or deacons. If negative interest is ascertained on the part of the candidate, he shall be deleted from those awaiting baptism.

### **Section 2. The Lord's Supper**

The church shall observe the Lord's Supper regularly as specified by church policy. The pastor and deacons shall administer the Lord's Supper; the deacons being responsible for the physical preparations.

## **X. CHURCH MEETINGS**

### **Section 1. Worship Services**

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday and Wednesday evening for the worship of Almighty God. Prayer, praise, preaching, instruction, and evangelism shall be among the ingredients of these services. The pastor or a person of his designation shall direct the services for all church members and others who may choose to attend.

### **Section 2. Special Services**

Revival services and any other church meetings essential to the advancement of the church's objectives shall be placed on the church calendar by the church leadership team (or church council).

## **XI. CHURCH CONFERENCE (BUSINESS MEETING)**

### **Section 1. Regular Church Conference (Business Meeting)**

The church shall hold regular church conference (business meeting) as designated by church policy.

### **Section 2. Special Church Conference (Called Business Meeting)**

The church may conduct called church conferences (called business meetings) to consider matters of special nature and significance. Notice must be given in accordance with church policy for the specially called church conference (business meeting) unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical. In which case, a meeting may be called by (1) agreement of a majority of the active deacons; (2) the chairman of the deacons, the pastor, and the chairman of the applicable committee; or (3) agreement of a majority of the church council.

The notice shall include the subject, the date, and time and place; and it must be given in such a manner that all resident members have opportunity to know of the meeting.

### **Section 3. Quorum**

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

### **Section 4. Parliamentary Rules**

*Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, Current Edition* is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all church conferences (business meetings) of the church.

### **Section 5. Moderator and Succession**

See Article II A "Officers", Section 2 "Moderator."

## **XII. CHURCH FINANCES**

### **Section 1. Budget**

The stewardship committee, in consultation with the Church Leadership Team (or Church Council), shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by items the amount needed and sought for all local and other expenses. Offering envelopes will be provided for members' use.

It is understood that membership in this church involves financial obligation to support the church and its causes with regular, proportionate gifts. Annually there shall be opportunity provided to secure worthy commitments of financial support from the church members.

## **Section 2. Accounting Procedures**

All funds received for any and all purposes shall pass through the hands of the church treasurer, or financial secretary, and be properly recorded on the books of the church. Those who have responsibility that involves actual handling of funds shall be bonded, the church paying the bond.

## **Section 3. Fiscal Year**

The church fiscal year shall begin on October 1 and end September 30.

### **XIII. ELECTIONS AND ROTATIONS**

The church shall hold elections at such time and in such manner as designated by church policy. All officers shall be elected or appointed in accordance with church policy. Vacancies shall be filled as provided by church policy.

### **XIV. CHURCH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

The church shall develop and maintain a Church Policies and Procedures Manual to include church policies and procedures and organization charts depicting lines of responsibility in the administration of the church. The manual shall be kept in the church office and made available for use there by any member of the church. The church secretary shall maintain the manual. The Church Council shall review the manual at least annually, with authority to recommend changes for the church to consider. Any church member or church organization may recommend such changes to the Church Council.

#### **Revision may be by one of the following methods:**

Policies or procedures may be added, revised, or deleted by recommendation of the church officer or organization to whose areas of assignment the procedures relate, or by the Church Council, and presented to the church for approval.

Any church member or church organization may initiate suggested changes in the manual by presenting a motion in any regularly scheduled church conference (business meeting). Policies or procedures may then be added, revised, or deleted by a majority vote of the church at two consecutive church conferences (business meetings).

### **XV. AMENDMENTS**

Changes in the Bylaws may be made at any regular church conference (business meeting) of the church provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous business meeting and copies of the proposed amendment shall have been furnished to each member present at the earlier meeting and to each member requesting one at the church office. Amendments to the Bylaws shall be by two thirds (2/3) of votes cast of church members present and voting at two consecutive regular church conferences (business meetings).