

# BYLAWS OF UNION HILL BAPTIST CHURCH

## I. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

### Section 1. Doctrine

The Holy Bible comprised of both the Old Testament and the New Testament shall be the authority and guide for faith and practice for all church members. The Articles of Faith for this church shall be the current version of the Baptist Faith and Message with amendments.

### Section 2. 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 independent of denominational control in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church. It is not subject to the control of any other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches. Union Hill Baptist Church will voluntarily cooperate with and support the Friendship Baptist Association, Alabama State Board of Missions, and the Southern Baptist Convention, provided such cooperation does not conflict with the church's own best interests.

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 said church for membership and have been accepted by two-thirds (2/3) 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 3. 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 by 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 believers' baptism by immersion by 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 (2/3) 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 (2/3) vote of those church members present and voting shall be required to accept such candidates to membership.

#### **Section 4. 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 5. 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. Each candidate for paid or volunteer office shall be Christ-like in conduct following the standards in the Bible.
- 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 6. Termination of Membership**

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

#### **Section 7. 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 Matthew 5:9; John 17:20-23; Romans 12:18; Ephesians 4:1-3) and that when disputes arise, Christians should resolve them according to the principles set forth in Scripture (see Proverbs 19:11; Matthew 5:23-25; 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 6:1-8; Galatians 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 (Matthew 7:3-5) and shall prayerfully seek to discern whether the offense is so serious it cannot be overlooked (Proverbs 19:11; 15:18; 17:14; 20:3; Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:13; 1 Peter 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 effecting reconciliation.

- (4) Before the matter is taken to the congregation according to the directed procedure of Matthew 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 8. 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 (2/3) 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 (2/3) vote of the members present and voting.

## **II. CHURCH OFFICERS**

### **Section 1. Trustees**

The church shall elect three (3) 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 be re-elected for another term.

### **Section 2. Moderator**

During church conference (business meeting), 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. Church 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 with a copy preserved and maintained in a location of the clerk’s discretion.

### **Section 4. Parliamentarian**

The church shall annually elect a parliamentarian to assist the moderator to manage church conferences (business meetings) and advise on parliamentary procedure (Robert’s Rules of Order, bylaws,

policies and procedures, etc.). If this person is not present when needed, an acting parliamentarian may be appointed.

## **Section 5. Treasurer**

The church shall elect annually a 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 church conference (business meeting) an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements since the previous meeting. The treasurer's report and records shall be audited annually near the end of the fiscal year 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.

## **Section 6. Discharge of Church Officers**

Church officers shall serve at the will of the congregation. Any of the above-listed church officers may be discharged by a majority vote of the church sitting in a duly held church conference (business meeting) for any cause the church deems advisable; provided, however, any such officer shall first be provided an opportunity to defend himself/herself either before or during such conference. Such action shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one (1)-week's notice has been given. The vote to discharge an officer shall be by secret ballot; an affirmative vote of a majority of the members present and voting being necessary to effect the discharge. In all such actions, due process shall be seriously followed.

# **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 I 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 (Acts 6:3).
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 3:8, 10).
4. Shall be active and faithful to all major areas of church life (Acts 6:3, 1 Timothy 3:10).
5. Shall not be a gossip (1 Timothy 3:8).

6. 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).
7. If married, neither the husband nor wife shall have been divorced (1 Timothy 3:11,12).
8. 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).
9. Must rule his children and his own house well (1 Timothy 3:12).
10. Must believe in salvation by grace, through faith, on the basis of the substitutionary death of Christ for sinners (Ephesians 2:8-9, John 3:16).
11. Shall do all in his power to create and preserve harmony in the church (Acts 6:1-6, Matthew 5:9, Romans 12:18).
12. Shall be able to keep, and have the reputation for keeping, in confidence those things which should not be discussed with others (1 Timothy 3:8).
13. Shall recognize the God-given spiritual leadership that is incumbent upon the office of a pastor and seek to serve under that leadership (Acts 6:2).
14. Shall have been a member of Union Hill Baptist Church for at least two years before his recommendation to the deacon body (1 Timothy 3:6, 10).

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

1. Members of the church will be given opportunity to nominate up to four (4) men on forms provided and at the time set for such business. At least two (2)-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 qualified candidates who meet the requirements of the church will be interviewed. In the case of a tie, the person with the longest membership tenure will receive precedence.
4. If, following the interview, the nominee(s) will accept the office of deacon, their name(s) will be presented to the church for election in a church conference (business meeting) for which two (2)-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 honored. If not ordained at the time of election, the pastor and deacons will provide opportunity for their ordination in a timely manner.

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

1. The number of active deacons and the family/deacon ratio shall be determined by the deacon body and approved by church vote, based on the needs of the church.
2. A deacon shall serve when elected until he moves, asks to become inactive, moves membership from the church, is discharged from office, or is deceased.
3. When a vacancy occurs in the deacon body, the church may call for a deacon election following prescribed procedure. Alternatively, the deacon body may recommend for reinstatement an

inactive deacon who has requested to become active. A recommendation of reinstatement shall be presented to the church for vote.

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 according to church policy.

#### **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 ministry's 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.

#### **Section 7. Discharge of Deacons**

A deacon may be discharged by a majority vote of the church sitting in a duly held church conference (business meeting) for any cause the church deems advisable; provided, however, any such deacon shall first be provided an opportunity to defend himself either before or during such conference. Such action shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one (1)-week's notice has been given. The vote to discharge a deacon shall be by secret ballot; an affirmative vote of a majority of the members present and voting being necessary to effect the discharge. In all such actions, due process shall be seriously followed.

### **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. He shall be an ex-officio member of all organizations, departments, committees, and councils and shall have no vote. In the event of absence, he may select an appointee to attend organizational, departmental, committee, and/or council meetings in his stead who also shall have no vote.

- (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 personnel committee shall recommend for vote 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 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 (1)-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 a recommendation to the selection committee according to church policy. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one name at a time. Election shall be by secret ballot, an affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) 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 serve as moderator in all church conferences (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 (2)-weeks' notice to the church at the time of resignation. 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.

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 (1)-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-half (1/2) of the annual average worship attendance. The moderator for this meeting shall be an outside person (the director of missions of the association or a representative of the State Board of Missions) or failing that, a person designated by the members present by majority vote and 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 (3)-months' compensation (unless extended by church action) whether the vacancy occurs by resignation or church vote. In the instance of gross misconduct, the termination shall be immediate, and no compensation shall be provided.

#### **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 (2)-weeks' notice shall be given to the church. 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. If the termination is the church's choice, the church shall vote to vacate such positions upon recommendation of the personnel committee, such termination being immediate. Except in instances of gross misconduct by the pastoral/ministerial staff member so excluded from office, the church will compensate the staff member no more than three (3)-months' compensation (unless extended by church action) whether the vacancy occurs by resignation or church vote. In the instance of gross misconduct, the termination shall be immediate, and no compensation shall be provided.

#### **Section 5. Interim Pastor and Pastoral/Ministerial Staff**

During a vacancy in the office of pastor, the personnel committee shall be responsible for obtaining pulpit supply. The committee may also, in consultation with the deacon body and ministerial staff, nominate an interim pastor. For a vacancy in other positions of pastoral/ministerial staff, the personnel committee may in consultation with the pastor, deacon body, and remaining ministerial staff, nominate an interim minister. The church shall provide a job description for the call of an interim pastor and/or minister. The church will extend a call to the interim pastor and/or minister by a two-thirds (2/3) vote taken in the absence of the candidate for the interim role. An interim pastor/minister call shall be extended for up to six (6)-months as agreed upon by the candidate and the personnel committee and may be extended in additional increments not to exceed six (6) months each at the will of the congregation. It is understood that whoever serves as interim pastor/minister will not be considered as a candidate for a pastoral/ministerial position.

## **Section 6. Interim Supervision**

In the absence of the pastor, in accordance with the church's organizational chart, the pastoral/ministerial staff member recommended by the personnel committee and approved by church vote shall be the supervisor of the church's administration. In the absence of all pastoral/ministerial staff, the deacon chairman shall administrate. The church may task the interim pastor with the church's administration if so provided in the job description from the church.

## **Section 7. Ordination of Ministers**

The church may ordain to the Gospel Ministry those men who are called by God and give evidence of the necessary gifts and character qualities (Ephesians 4:7-16; 1 Timothy 3:1-7) to carry out Christian ministry as ministers. The ordination process will be initiated by the recommendation of the pastor and the deacon body. An ordination council will convene and examine the candidate. The council will recommend candidates for ordination to the church and the church will vote on their recommendation at a regular or special-called church conference (business meeting).

## **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**

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**

The administrative committees of this church shall include a nominating committee, a personnel committee, a building and grounds 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 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 personnel committee assists the church in matters related to employed personnel administration, including those called by church action. Its work includes such areas as determining staff needs, employment, job descriptions, personnel services, and developing policies and procedures. It will work with the stewardship committee to recommend salaries, benefits, and other compensation for staff to the church for vote. In the event of disciplinary and/or termination action concerning a pastoral/ministerial staff member, if a related ministerial committee exists (e.g., music committee in the case of a music minister, youth committee in the case of a youth minister, etc.), an ex-officio member of the related committee shall be appointed to attend the associated personnel committee meetings to observe, advise, and voice an opinion but shall have no vote. When a personnel committee member is also a member of the related committee, no ex-officio member shall be appointed.
- (3) The building and grounds 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 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 (business meeting).

#### **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 council committees shall serve by virtue of the office(s) they hold as specified by church policy.

#### **Section 5. Discharge of Committee and Program/Organization Members**

Committee and program/organization members, including chairpersons and directors, serve at the will of the congregation. Any person in such a role may be discharged by a majority vote of the church sitting in a duly held church conference (business meeting) for any cause the church deems advisable; provided, however, any such person shall first be provided an opportunity to defend himself/herself either before or during such conference. Such action shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one (1)-week's notice has been given. The vote to discharge a committee or program/organization member shall be by secret ballot; an affirmative vote of a majority of the members present and voting being necessary to effect the discharge. In all such actions, due process shall be seriously followed.

### **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/she shall be deleted from those awaiting baptism and shall remain under watch-care.

### **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. MARRIAGE**

We believe that marriage is a union between one man and one woman, following biblical principles (Genesis 2:19-24, Leviticus 18:22, Matthew 19:4-6, Romans 1:18-27, Ephesians 5:22-33, Hebrews 13:4). We believe that God sanctions only the union in marriage of a man to a woman. Therefore, this church recognizes only a wedding compatible with those standards.

## **XI. CHURCH MEETINGS**

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

The church shall meet regularly on Sundays and Wednesday evenings 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 or church council.

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

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

The church shall hold regular church conferences (business meetings) 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.

## **XIII. CHURCH FINANCES**

### **Section 1. Budget**

The stewardship committee, in consultation with the pastor and church leadership, 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. Online giving will also be available.

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, and/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.

### **XIV. 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.

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

The church shall develop and maintain a church policies and procedures manual to include church policies and procedures and organizational 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.

### **XVI. AMENDMENTS**

These amended and revised bylaws, duly adopted on August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022, supersede and replace all prior bylaws. They may be amended, modified, or repealed only by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the voting members present at any duly convened church conference (business meeting) of the church, provided the proposed amendment(s) shall have been presented to the church in writing at any regular or duly called church conference (business meeting) of the church prior to the date established for voting on said amendment(s). When an amendment is proposed and has been rejected by the church, that amendment, or any amendment embodying the substance thereof, shall not be proposed again for at least six (6) months from the date of the rejection of such amendment.

Any amendments to these bylaws shall immediately go into full force and effect from and after their adoption.

## **XVII. AVAILABILITY AND ACCESS**

A copy of these bylaws shall be provided to any church member upon request to the church office. They shall also be available for access on the church website and otherwise available according to church policy.

Last revision in committee May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022