



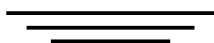
Meek Baptist Church

Love • Connect • Serve



Constitution & Bylaws

2026



Constitution & Bylaws of Meek Baptist Church

July 10, 2026

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Constitution

Introduction

The following Constitution and Bylaws are designed to help our Church operate in a scripturally faithful manner. They cover basic issues related to the governance and function of the Church. In particular, the Constitution and Bylaws are designed to accomplish the following goals:

1. Provide Members and prospective Members a thorough explanation of how the Church governs itself.
2. Establish clear operational guidelines to reduce confusion.
3. Establish procedures for church discipline and the exercise of authority by church leadership.

Scripture does not dictate exactly how everything within a church is to be done. For instance, Scripture does not dictate how to give notice or establish protocol for congregational meetings, at what age a Member can vote on church matters, the number of Elders/Deacons a church may have, etc. The Bylaws, specifically, are designed to answer these types of questions in accord with scriptural principles and will spare us from unnecessary confusion and conflict, help us to act in consistent and respectful ways, and allow us to devote ourselves to the more important matters of God's kingdom.

As you read the Constitution and Bylaws, we encourage you to look up and study the Scriptures that are cited next to particular provisions. If such study does not answer all of your questions and concerns, please do not hesitate to approach one of our Elders who will be happy to talk with you about these Bylaws.

Preamble

We, the Members of Meek Baptist Church, recognize this Church as a spiritual organization divinely instituted for the purpose of propagating the gospel of the Son of God and of cultivating the spiritual life of its Members; and believing that we are to look only to the Bible for the principles on which churches are to be founded and the laws by which they are to be governed in order that we may protect the unity and purpose of the fellowship as well as the liberties of each individual Member, properly govern ourselves, preserve the principles of our faith, and provide for cooperation with other churches of like faith and order, do hereby adopt this Constitution.

Mission

Every local church and every Christian is called to fulfill the words of Christ in “the Great Commission.” But more specifically, each local church should have a clearly defined mission and vision that Members unite behind.

Our Mission: Love • Connect • Serve

Love — We believe in loving our God with all we have and loving our neighbor as ourselves: the Great Commandment. Scripture says we cannot possibly love God in Heaven if we don’t love people on earth (1 John 4:20). Our weekly services give us the opportunity to love on our God and each other.

Connect — We believe in connecting together within the pillar and support of the truth: The Church. While our weekly worship services allow for real people to connect with a real God, our Connect Groups allow us to “get real” and connect with people in our Church family to foster godly relationships that will strengthen our walk with Christ.

Serve — We believe in serving one another, our community, our nation, and the world: The Great Commission. We seek to help one another discover and grow into our full potential as a follower of Christ. We don’t have to wait until we are perfect. The time for our lives to have real meaning is now. We strive to serve the community and the world for Christ.

Our Vision: To God’s glory, MBC will disciple Christians to worship God and evangelize Arley and the world for Christ.

Statement of Faith

Meek Baptist Church affirms *The Baptist Faith and Message 2000* and *The 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith*, which uphold Holy Scripture as the inerrant and infallible Word of Almighty God that contains all of the wisdom and guidance needed for living the Christian life.

In all of our theological understanding, we hold the following three statements dear:

In essential beliefs, we have unity. — Ephesians 4:4–6

In non-essential beliefs, we have liberty. — Romans 14:1, 4, 12, 22

In all our beliefs, we show charity. — 1 Corinthians 13:2

MBC is theologically conservative, emotionally expressive, mission-focused, and relationally interconnected. We are a community-focused church welcoming all regardless of background.

Statement on Marriage & Sexuality

Marriage is a biblical institution established by God as clearly described in the Scriptures. We recognize that marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment (Gen 2:19–24; Lev 18:22; Matt 19:4–6; Rom 1:18–27; Eph 5:22–33; Heb 13:4).

Accordingly, this Church, its Elders, staff, and Members will not conduct or participate in same-sex unions, same-sex marriages, transgender unions, or transgender marriages, whether on or off Church-owned properties. Doing so would be grounds for termination.

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus. We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful or harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of the Church.

Church Covenant

Having, as we trust, been brought by Divine grace to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus—which involves dying to ourselves, taking up our cross, and following Him daily—and having professed our faith through baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we now joyfully and solemnly enter into covenant with God and the other Members of this body of Christ, committing ourselves by His grace to do the following:

1. We will protect the unity of our Church by:
 - Acting in love toward other Members, seeking the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, rejoicing in one another's happiness and, when human failure occurs, pursuing the words of our Lord through forgiveness and reconciliation.
 - Refusing to gossip, slander, or otherwise defame the name of Christ or fellow Church Members.
 - Following the Church leaders and being a positive advocate for our Church and pastoral staff, exercising affectionate care and watchfulness over each other, and faithfully admonishing one another as occasion may require.

2. We will share the responsibility of our Church by:
 - Praying for its growth and for one another regularly and raising our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.
 - Inviting the unchurched to attend and seeking the salvation of our family and acquaintances.
 - Warmly welcoming those who visit and intentionally discipling those who profess Christ as Savior and Lord.
3. We will serve the ministry of our Church by:
 - Discovering our gifts and talents and actively engaging in the ministry of the Church through their use.
 - Being equipped to serve by our leaders and proclaiming the gospel to the ends of the earth.
 - Developing a servant's heart and bearing one another's burdens.
4. We will support the testimony of our Church by:
 - Attending worship services and other gatherings faithfully, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together for the weekly worship of our God, the regular practice of His ordinances, and the careful teaching of biblical doctrine.
 - Living a godly life, striving to walk in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ in words, thoughts, and actions, and practicing personal discipline so that the Lord alone has mastery over us.
 - Giving as the Lord has prospered us, cheerfully supporting the Church financially in its ministries locally and globally.
 - Uniting with a like-minded church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word if providentially moved from this place.

Bylaws

Article I – Definitions

- 1.1.1 Triune God – “Triune God” means the one true and living God, eternally existing in three distinct Persons—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit—equal in power and glory and of one divine essence. References throughout these Bylaws to the Triune God, the Godhead, the Holy Trinity, or the Trinity shall be construed as references to the one God eternally existing in three Persons.
- 1.1.2 God – “God” means God the Father, the first Person of the Triune God, who is the Creator and Sustainer of all things and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. References throughout these Bylaws to God, the Father, God the Father, Heavenly Father, Father in Heaven, the Almighty, the Most High, the LORD, Yahweh, or any other biblical name or title referring to Him shall be construed as references to the same Person, God the Father.
- 1.1.3 Jesus – “Jesus” means Jesus the Christ, the second Person of the Triune God, the eternal Son of God and Savior of sinners. References throughout these Bylaws to Jesus, Christ, the Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, God the Son, the Messiah, the Savior, the Redeemer, the King, the Chief Shepherd, or any other biblical name or title referring to Him shall be construed as references to the same Person, Jesus the Christ.
- 1.1.4 Holy Spirit – “Holy Spirit” means the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Triune God, who proceeds from the Father and the Son and who indwells, sanctifies, gifts, and empowers believers. References throughout these Bylaws to the Holy Spirit, the Spirit, the Spirit of God, God the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, the Counselor, the Comforter, the Helper, or any other biblical name or title referring to Him shall be construed as references to the same Person, the Holy Spirit.
- 1.1.5 Divine Personal Pronouns – Capitalized personal pronouns, including “He,” “Him,” “His,” “Himself,” and similar forms used throughout these Bylaws, shall refer to the Triune God or, as the context requires, to God the Father, God the Son, or God the Holy Spirit.
- 1.1.6 The Gospel – “The gospel” means the good news of salvation through Jesus as set forth in Holy Scripture and affirmed by the Church's Statement of Faith. References throughout these Bylaws to the gospel shall be construed in accordance with those doctrinal standards.

- 1.1.7 Church — “Church” means Meek Baptist Church and may be referred to throughout these Bylaws as “Meek Baptist Church” or “MBC.” References to the Church, this Church, our Church, Meek Baptist Church, or MBC shall be construed as references to the same local congregation and its duly authorized ministries and representatives, as the context requires.
- 1.1.8 Member — “Member” means an individual who has been received into the membership of MBC in accordance with Article II — Membership. References throughout these Bylaws to a Member or Members shall refer to individuals recognized as members of MBC pursuant to Article II.
- 1.1.9 Lord’s Day — “Lord’s Day” means Sunday, the first day of the week, observed by the Church as the weekly day of corporate worship in celebration of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. References throughout these Bylaws to the Lord’s Day or Sunday shall be construed as references to the same day.
- 1.1.10 Theologically Conservative — “Theologically conservative” is the belief that the Bible is the authoritative, divinely inspired, and inerrant Word of God, meant to shape culture rather than be shaped by it.
- 1.1.11 Emotionally Expressive — “Emotionally expressive” means the outward communication of emotions, feelings, or affections through words, tone, facial expressions, gestures, or other observable behaviors. Emotional expressiveness may vary among individuals and, by itself, shall not be construed as evidence of spiritual maturity, instability, or any particular personality type.
- 1.1.12 Good Standing — “Good standing” means the status of a Member who is in active membership and is not under church discipline or pending removal from membership pursuant to Article II — Membership. References throughout these Bylaws to a Member in good standing shall be construed in accordance with Article II — Membership.
- 1.1.13 Like-Minded — “Like-minded” means substantially aligned with the biblical convictions, doctrinal beliefs, philosophy of ministry, and church polity reflected in the Constitution and Bylaws of MBC.

Article II – Membership

Section 1 – General

- 2.1.1 The foundation of this Church is the Lord Jesus (1 Cor 3:11; Eph 2:20), and He guides His Church in all affairs through the Holy Scriptures (Ps 119; 2 Tim 3:16–17). Therefore, the purpose of this Church is to glorify God through Jesus, in the power of the Holy Spirit (Isa 43:7; Eph 1:6, 12, 14).
- 2.1.2 The priorities of ministry of this Church flow from the vision of God's glory revealed in Jesus. We exist to see and savor this vision in worship (John 4:23), strengthen the vision in nurture (1 Cor 14:26; 2 Peter 3:18), and spread the vision in evangelism, missions, and loving deeds (Matt 5:16; 28:18–20; 1 Pet 2:9; 3:15).
- 2.1.3 In order to remain true to our Lord and His Word, this Church must be marked by preaching the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27; 2 Tim 4:1–2), administering baptism (Matt 28:19; Rom 6:1–4) and the Lord's Supper (Luke 22:19; 1 Cor 11:17–34), loving one another (John 13:34–35; 1 John 3:11–24; 4:7–12), and practicing formative (1 Thess 5:14; 1 Tim 5:1–2; Titus 2:15) and corrective discipline (Matt 18:15–20; 1 Cor 5:1–5).

Section 2 – Qualification for Membership

- 2.2.1 To qualify for membership in this Church, a person must:
 - 1. Be a believer in Jesus;
 - 2. Be baptized by immersion in obedience to Christ following their regeneration;
 - 3. Affirm the Christian faith as revealed in Holy Scripture;
 - 4. Sustain the doctrines of our Church in accord with our Statement of Faith; and,
 - 5. Promise to keep the commitments expressed in the Church Covenant.

Section 3 – Process for Membership

- 2.3.1 Upon meeting the qualifications for membership:
 - 1. Candidates must complete a New Members' Class for orientation to the doctrines of our Church and be given either a written or digital copy of the Constitution and Bylaws;
 - 2. Each candidate must participate in an interview with a majority of the Elders to assess his/her qualifications for membership to assure the Church that proper measures have been put into place for the protection of each Member.
 - 3. Any letters of transfer will be reviewed by the Elders to ensure that each candidate is in good standing with the Church he/she is leaving.

4. Candidates recommended by the Elders will be voted on by the Church Members on the basis of the person's profession of faith and baptism.
- 2.3.2 To be admitted into Church membership, applicants shall be recommended by the Elders for admission and accepted by an affirmative vote of at least seventy-five percent (75%) of Members present and voting at a Members' Business Meeting. At that point, newly received Members shall relinquish their membership in other churches. Those applying for membership will be received as Members by baptism or transfer of letter. A statement of faith may suffice in the event that a letter of transfer is not obtainable.
- 2.3.3 Because believer's baptism is required for admission into Church membership and the Lord's Supper is an ongoing privilege of Church membership, MBC practices these ordinances as described below.
 1. Baptism — Believer's 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/her faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is a prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.
 2. Lord's Supper — The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church through partaking of the bread and fruit of the vine memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Three common views on Communion include open, close, and closed. Open Communion allows anyone to partake, regardless of their specific church or denominational affiliation. Close Communion allows visiting church members of like-minded faith and doctrine to participate. This is to ensure participants share a unified understanding of what the sacrament represents. Closed Communion restricts the participation to only members of the local church. We practice Close Communion at MBC. Salvation and believer's baptism are prerequisites to participating in the Lord's Supper.

Section 4 – Responsibilities and Privileges of Members

2.4.1 The responsibilities of each Member of this Church are to:

1. Act in love toward other Members. — We will walk together in Christian love, purity, and unity so that the world may know we are Christ's disciples (John 13:34–35; 1 Pet 1:22; Col 3:17, 23–24). In all our activities and relationships, we will seek to exhibit the fruit of the Spirit, bearing one another's burdens with grace and patience (Gal 5:19–26).
2. Refuse to gossip. — We will demonstrate a godly witness through our speech, avoiding gossip, slander, and divisiveness. Instead, we will seek wisdom, grace, and thankfulness in our conversations (Col 4:5–6; Eph 4:29; 1 Pet 3:15–16).
3. Follow the Church leaders and be a positive advocate for them and the Church. — We will joyfully submit to and pray for our Elders, supporting their God-given leadership and trusting in their spiritual care (Heb 13:17–18). We also commit to humbly receiving instruction, correction, and, when necessary, loving discipline (Matt 18:15–17).
4. Pray for the Church's growth. — We will devote ourselves to prayer—for our Elders, Deacons, Church Staff, the Church body, the lost, and the mission of the gospel—with watchfulness and thanksgiving (Col 4:2; Eph 4:15–16).
5. Invite the unchurched to attend. — We will seek opportunities to share Christ with others, inviting those who do not yet know Him into fellowship and to hear the gospel (Luke 14:23). We will demonstrate a personal faith in Jesus to our friends, neighbors, and colleagues through our actions and prayer life (Col 4:5–6).
6. Warmly welcome those who visit. — We will practice hospitality and create a culture of welcome for all who visit our gatherings, demonstrating Christlike kindness and grace (Rom 15:7).
7. Utilize our gifts and talents. — We recognize that God has gifted each believer through the Holy Spirit for the good of the body. Each Member is expected to use his/her spiritual gifts to serve others and advance God's Kingdom (1 Pet 4:10–11).
8. Be equipped by our leaders to serve. — We will receive equipping and training from our leaders for works of service, that the Church may be built up in love and maturity (Eph 4:11–13).

9. Develop a servant's heart. — We will serve the Church with care and concern for each Member, seeking to reflect the humility and sacrificial love of Christ (Mark 10:45; Phil 2:3–4).
10. Attend Sunday morning worship services and other weekly gatherings faithfully. — We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together but will prioritize seeking God's kingdom through regular corporate worship, Bible study, prayer, fellowship, and Members' meetings (Heb 10:24–25; Acts 2:46–47; Matt 6:33).
11. Live a godly life. — We will strive to walk in a manner worthy of the gospel—practicing holiness in our thoughts, words, and actions—and maintaining a lifestyle of personal discipline (Phil 1:27; Rom 12:1–2). This includes maintaining sexual purity in accordance with Scripture (Rom 1:24–28; Eph 5:5).
12. Give as the Lord prospers us. — We will contribute cheerfully and regularly to the financial support of the Church, the relief of the needy, and the spread of the gospel to all people (1 Cor 16:1–4; 2 Cor 8:3; 9:7).

2.4.2 Membership shall entitle the Member to vote in Church business. The privilege of voting is restricted to active Members in good standing who are eighteen (18) years of age and older.

2.4.3 Since God exhorts us to “not [forsake] our own assembling together, as is the habit of some” (Heb 10:25), when a Member stops attending worship services or participating in the life of the Church for six (6) months or more (unless they are providentially hindered, e.g. homebound, on mission, traveling, work, or school), the Elders will be responsible for determining the reason for the absence from fellowship and will strive to bring about repentance and restoration to the absent Member.

Absentee Members who no longer wish to remain Members will be removed from the Church membership roll. Absentee Members who do not wish to relinquish their membership but are unwilling to resume participation in the life and work of the Church will be placed on inactive status. Inactive Members are excluded from the privileges of active Members (including voting, worthily partaking of the Lord's Supper, and free rental of the Church's facilities) until such time as they are restored to fellowship.

To regain active membership status, the inactive Member shall follow MBC's normal membership process (Article II, Section 3), including meeting with the Elders and being brought before the

congregation for a vote of approval, before being joyfully restored to the life and work of the Church.

Section 5 – Church Discipline

2.5.1 Church discipline always has repentance and restoration as its goal, and its purposes are for:

1. The glory of God as we reflect His holiness (1 Cor 5:6; Matt 18:20);
2. The repentance and restoration of the person being disciplined (Matt 18:15; Gal 6:1; Heb 12:1–11; Matt 18:15–17; 1 Cor 5:5);
3. The good of other Christians (1 Cor 5:11; 1 Tim 5:20; Heb 10:24–25);
4. The health of the church as a whole (1 Cor 5:6–7; Eph 5:27; Rev 21:2); and,
5. The corporate witness of the church to the world (Matt 5:13–16; John 13:35; Acts 5:10–14).

2.5.2 Any Member consistently neglectful of his/her responsibilities (§ 2.4.1) or guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the Church, shall be subject to the admonition of the Elders and the discipline of the Church, according to the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17 and the examples found in Holy Scripture (Gal 6:1; 1 Cor 5:1–5; 1 Tim 1:18–20, 5:19–20; 2 Tim 2:16–18; James 5:19–20).

2.5.3 Before Church Discipline is Administered

1. It shall be the duty of any Member of this Church who has knowledge of a Member's heresy or misconduct to warn and to correct the errant Member in private, seeking their repentance.
2. If the errant Member does not repent, then the warning Member shall again go to the errant Member accompanied by one or two witnesses to warn and correct the errant Member, again seeking their repentance.
3. If the errant Member still refuses to repent, then it shall be brought to the attention of the Elders.

2.5.4 Administering Church Discipline

1. The Elders, after being informed of the errant Member's heresy or misconduct, shall carefully and prayerfully investigate the accusations and determine if the errant Member should be placed under church discipline and shall disclose such actions to the Church if scripturally appropriate.

2. Members who are under church discipline will not be allowed to partake in the Lord's Supper or serve in any position within the Church.
3. The Elders will attempt to walk with the disciplined Member for a time to encourage repentance and restoration.
4. If the disciplined Member continues in ongoing sin and does not display a heart of reconciliation, then the Elders shall recommend the termination of the disciplined Member's Church membership.
5. As the final act of church discipline, membership is terminated at the recommendation of the Elders and a seventy-five percent (75%) majority vote via secret ballot from Members present at any regular or special-called meeting of the Members. Members shall lovingly pray at such meeting (as well as privately) for the disciplined Member's repentance, renewal, and restoration to fellowship.
6. It is understood that this discipline process will continue to conclusion even if the errant Member leaves the Church or otherwise seeks to withdraw from membership to avoid the discipline process.

2.5.5 Restoration of Membership

After termination of membership, should a disciplined person then heed the warnings, demonstrate repentance, and request reinstatement, they shall be publicly restored to membership only after having again fulfilled all the membership requirements. Any such request shall be made to the Elders (Gal 6:1). Members should warmly and joyfully accept the repentant person back into membership in accordance with Article II, Section 3.

Section 6 — Termination of Membership

2.6.1 Membership may be terminated in one of four ways:

1. By physical death;
2. By transfer, when requested by a departing Member in good standing with a letter of transfer granted by the Elders to the fellowship of another like-minded church;
3. By resignation, except as provided by § 2.5.4; or,
4. By dismissal, as the final act of church discipline.

2.6.2 In the instance of physical death, resignation, or transfer, no vote shall be required to terminate membership. In the instance of dismissal, termination of membership shall proceed after a seventy-five percent (75%) majority vote via secret ballot from the Members present at any regular or special-called meeting of the Members.

Article III – Leadership & Polity

Section 1 – General Overview

- 3.1.1 Church polity is an extremely practical and theologically significant issue. Scriptural structure and function allow the peaceful and orderly working out of the ministry of a church (1 Cor 14:33, 40). Just as God has given us the structure and function of each person in the family, He has done so in regard to His church. The purpose of such structure is to glorify God by ensuring spiritual maturity—both individually and corporately—as a New Testament church. The Scriptural offices of a church as revealed in the New Testament are Elders and Deacons.
- 3.1.2 Jesus is the head of this Church, and He rules primarily through the Scriptures. Under the Chief Shepherd, MBC is Elder-led, Deacon-served, and congregation-ruled.
- 3.1.3 Elder-led – MBC is guided and directed by God through the Elders who are responsible for the vision and direction of the Church (Acts 20:28; 1 Tim 3:1–7; Titus 1:7–9; 1 Pet 5:1–4).
- 3.1.4 Deacon-served – The Deacons are to serve and care for the physical needs of the Church under the oversight of the Elders, thus relieving the Elders for the ministry of the Word, prayer, and guiding the congregation in doctrinal truth (Acts 6:1–4; 1 Tim 3:8–13; Phil 1:1).
- 3.1.5 Congregation-ruled – As a local autonomous body of Christ, the congregational membership has the ultimate authority in the Church—under Christ—and thus has the ability to select its qualified Elders (§§ 3.2.4–3.2.5); therefore, the congregation is also expected to trust its Elders to lead well and to submit to their counsel (1 Tim 5:17; Heb 13:17–18; 1 Thess 5:12–13). The congregational membership also has the final say in selecting its qualified Deacons who have been approved by the Elders (§ 3.3.3).
- The congregational membership carries the final authority in matters of major consequence. The congregation is responsible for approving the Church budget (including employee compensation) (§ 4.3.4), buying or selling of property, incurring of debt, and affirmation and termination of Church officers and employees (§§ 3.2.4, 3.2.5, 3.2.8, 3.3.3, 3.3.5, 3.4.4, 3.4.6, 3.5.3).
- 3.1.6 In addition to the biblical offices of Elder and Deacon, our Church may establish and maintain other positions and teams to assist in carrying out its ministry as set forth in §§ 3.4.1–3.5.1 (1 Cor 12:4–12).

Section 2 – Elders

- 3.2.1 Holy Scripture clearly instructs that Elders shall provide leadership, oversight, and care of the church. Christ, as head of the church, has chosen to mediate His rule in the church through the shepherding of Elders (1 Tim 3:1–7; Acts 20:17–18, 28–31; 1 Pet 5:1–4). This Church may have both staff Elders and lay Elders. Staff Elders are those who, in response to God’s calling on their life, serve the Church as their primary vocation. As such, they are to be supported financially by the Church in return for their labors. Those Elders not receiving compensation from the Church will be called lay Elders, although scripturally and functionally there is no difference among the Elders. Only men may serve as Elders in accord with 1 Timothy 2:12; 3:2. The Church is to assist, be led by, and respect the Elders as they carry out their duties (Heb 13:17).
- 3.2.2 Qualifications – Elders shall be men who:
1. Meet the qualifications set forth in Holy Scripture (1 Tim 3:1–7; 2 Tim 2:24–25; Titus 1:5–9; Acts 6:3–6);
 2. Adhere to the doctrinal basis of this Church;
 3. Are characterized by a pattern of faithful attendance and whose wife is characterized by a pattern of faithful attendance;
 4. Have displayed soundness in the faith and whose ability to serve has been examined and approved by the Elders and the Church; and,
 5. Are active Members in good standing and, for lay Elders, have been active Members in good standing for no less than one (1) year.
- 3.2.3 Duties and Responsibilities – Elders shall have broad oversight in the ministry, financial management, and resources of the Church. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1–6; 1 Tim 3:1–7; 5:17; Titus 1:5–9; James 5:14; and 1 Pet 5:1–4, the Elders shall seek the mind of Christ through the guidance of the Holy Spirit and Holy Scripture as they undertake the work of shepherding God’s flock. Accordingly, the Elders shall have particular responsibilities that include, but are not limited to:
1. Giving themselves to prayer and the study of God’s Word;
 2. Preaching, teaching, and expounding Holy Scripture;
 3. Refuting those who contradict the truth;
 4. Leading worship services;
 5. Administering the ordinances in accordance with the Word of God;
 6. Conducting the business meetings of the Church;

7. Maintaining church discipline;
8. Mobilizing the Church for local and global missions;
9. Guiding the financial condition of the Church;
10. Overseeing the work of the Deacons, appointed Church agents, and Ministry Teams;
11. Supervising and evaluating Church employees;
12. Examining and approving all prospective candidates for the offices of Elder and Deacon;
13. Approving all subordinate parachurch ministries;
14. Approving all applicants for Church membership;
15. Approving nominations for Ministry Team leaders and Church agents;
16. Communicating to the congregation on a regular basis regarding the activities and concerns of the Elders; and,
17. Bringing issues of consequence to the congregation.

- 3.2.4 Affirmation of Paid Elders — When a paid Elder position becomes vacant, the Elder body shall evaluate whether the position needs to be filled. If they determine that it does, the Elders shall lead the process of identifying and assessing qualified candidates who meet the biblical requirements for eldership as outlined in Scripture and these Bylaws. The Elders may involve Members of the congregation in the search process at their discretion, including soliciting name submissions, written questions, comments, or concerns regarding potential candidates.

The Elders shall conduct a thorough examination of each potential candidate's character, theological beliefs, and pastoral qualifications. This may include interviews, questionnaires, references (both solicited and unsolicited), and observation of ministry activity. When the Elders have selected a candidate to pursue, he shall be interviewed and approved by the full Elder body before being presented to the Members for affirmation. Only one (1) candidate shall be brought forward to the congregation at a time.

Notice of the nomination shall be given at two (2) Sunday morning services prior to a Members' Business Meeting held for the purpose of affirming the call. If the position is for a paid Preaching and Teaching Elder, the candidate must also preach at least one (1) trial sermon during a Sunday morning worship service of the Church before the Members' Business Meeting. During that meeting, Members will have the opportunity to ask the candidate questions. If the Elder body remains biblically confident in the candidate following this time, a vote of affirmation shall be taken by secret ballot.

The call of Elder shall be extended to the candidate upon an affirmative vote of at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the Members present and voting. Upon election, a written call shall be issued to the candidate, signed by the Elders. The Church shall reimburse any reasonable search-related expenses incurred by the Elders or any designated participants involved in the process.

- 3.2.5 Affirmation of Lay Elders – Lay Elders will be selected based on the needs of the Church and by the call and qualification of men in the Church.

Nominations for the office of Elder will be solicited annually, and any Member in good standing may nominate one or more men. The Elders will meet to discuss the qualifications of each nominee and will approach qualified nominees to assess their willingness to serve.

Each qualified and willing candidate shall be presented to the congregation for a period of not less than thirty (30) days. During this period, Members are encouraged to pray for wisdom and discernment, review the candidate's testimony and qualifications, ask the candidate questions, observe his manner of life, and communicate any biblical concerns or affirmations to the Elders.

At the conclusion of the evaluation period, each candidate must receive at least a seventy-five percent (75%) affirmative vote via secret ballot from the Members present and voting at a Members' Business Meeting prior to taking office.

- 3.2.6 Authority – All Elders are to be considered equal in authority. There are biblical reasons to have some Elders that are staff, such is the case with the Preaching and Teaching Elder. Staff Elders, according to Scripture, need the freedom to make their living by the gospel. In other words, they must be freed up to serve the Church by studying the word of God and shepherding the flock of the Church. However, this does not give staff Elders more authority than the lay Elders of the Church. The Preaching and Teaching Elder casts the vision for the Church. This puts him in the position of leading all the other Elders in a biblical direction where the vision of the Church is being lived out among the congregation.

- 3.2.7 Discipline – As Elders hold a special office in the Church, they should take their responsibility with utmost seriousness and shall be held to a high standard of conduct, Church attendance and involvement, and manner of life (Luke 12:48; 1 Tim 3:1–7). An Elder is to be faithful in Church attendance, small group attendance, and Church functions as well as in his particular area of service in the Elder body. His wife is also to be faithful in all things. If an Elder is not serving according to the standards set forth in Scripture or becomes unqualified at any point, then he

shall be subject to discipline. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17 and 1 Timothy 5:19–20.

3.2.8 Termination — An Elder's service may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. An Elder who resigns shall submit a written resignation letter to the Church at least two (2) weeks prior to his final Sunday of service whenever practicable. An Elder may be dismissed from office if he becomes:

1. Willfully neglectful in his duties and responsibilities;
2. Physically or mentally incapable of fulfilling his office;
3. Spiritually unqualified;
4. Unable or unfit to serve as determined by the other Elders; or,
5. Morally, ethically, doctrinally, or spiritually impure for the office as determined by the Elders.

The Members reserve the right to call into question the qualifications of any Elder whom they believe no longer meets the biblical qualifications for the office. In accordance with 1 Tim 5:19–20, no accusation against an Elder shall be received except on the evidence of two or three witnesses. Upon receipt of such an accusation, the Elders who are not themselves the subject of the accusation shall conduct a careful and impartial investigation consistent with Scripture.

Following the investigation, the Elders shall report their findings to the Members. If the accusations are determined to be unsubstantiated, the Elders shall communicate that determination to the congregation, and the Elder in question shall be restored to his duties with love and compassion. If the Elders determine that the accusations are substantiated and that biblical grounds for dismissal exist, they shall recommend dismissal to the Members.

An Elder may be dismissed only upon the recommendation of the Elders and the affirmative vote of at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the Members present and voting by secret ballot at a regular or special-called Members' Business Meeting.

3.2.9 Term of Service for Lay Elders — While Elders receive lifetime ordinations, they shall be elected to a four-year term of active service on the Elder body to begin on the date of his ordination. Following that term of service, an Elder will enter a one-year period of rest. Following that rest period, the Elder will once again be eligible to be nominated by the congregation for another period of active service. Terms of active service may be extended with the Elder's assent should the pool of men qualified and willing to hold the office be insufficient to meet the needs of the Church body.

Section 3 – Deacons

- 3.3.1 The term “deacon” means servant. All Christians, therefore, are in some sense deacons (servants) of the church. However, the New Testament recognizes a special office designated to serve the church (1 Tim 3:8–13; Phil 1:1). Scripture teaches that deacons were set apart by the church as servants to minister to the needs of the body of Christ (Acts 6:1–6; 1 Tim 3:8–13). Deacons exercise a ministry of service in the church. This ministry allows the Elders to devote themselves to prayer and ministry of the Word. This Church shall recognize men who are called to further serve and care for the Church’s Members and who meet the scriptural qualifications. The number of Deacons (if any) shall be determined by the call and qualification of men in the Church.
- 3.3.2 Qualifications – Deacons shall be men who:
1. Meet the qualifications set forth in Holy Scripture (Acts 6:3–6; 1 Tim 3:8–13);
 2. Adhere to the doctrinal basis of this Church;
 3. Are characterized by a pattern of faithful attendance and whose wife is characterized by a pattern of faithful attendance;
 4. Have displayed soundness in the faith and whose ability to serve has been examined and approved by the Elders and the Church; and,
 5. Are active Members in good standing and have been active Members in good standing for no less than one (1) year.
- 3.3.3 Affirmation – The Deacon body number shall be determined by the needs of the Church and by the call and qualification of men in the Church.

Nominations for the office of Deacon will be solicited annually, and any Member in good standing may nominate one or more men for the office. The Elders will meet to discuss the qualifications of each nominee and will approach qualified nominees to assess their willingness to serve.

Each qualified and willing candidate shall be presented to the congregation for a period of not less than thirty (30) days. During this period, Members are encouraged to pray for wisdom and discernment, review the candidate’s testimony and qualifications, ask the candidate questions, observe his manner of life, and communicate any biblical concerns or affirmations to the Elders.

At the conclusion of the evaluation period, each candidate must receive at least a seventy-five percent (75%) affirmative vote via secret ballot from the Members present and voting at a Members’ Business Meeting prior to taking office.

- 3.3.4 Discipline — As Deacons hold a special office in the Church, they should take their responsibility with utmost seriousness (1 Tim 3:8) and shall be held to a high standard of conduct, Church attendance and involvement, and manner of life (Luke 12:48; 1 Tim 3:13). A Deacon is to be faithful in Church attendance, small group attendance, and Church functions as well as in his particular area of service in the diaconate body. His wife is also to be faithful in all things (1 Tim 3:11). If a Deacon is not serving according to the standards set forth in Scripture or becomes unqualified at any point, then he shall be subject to discipline. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17 and 1 Timothy 5:19–20.
- 3.3.5 Termination — A Deacon's service may be terminated by fulfillment of the need for which he was appointed, by resignation, or by dismissal. Any Deacon may be dismissed from office if he becomes:
1. Willfully neglectful in his duties and responsibilities;
 2. Physically or mentally incapable of fulfilling his office;
 3. Spiritually unqualified;
 4. Unable or unfit to serve as determined by the Elders; or,
 5. Morally, ethically, doctrinally, or spiritually impure for the office as determined by the Elders.

The Members reserve the right to call into question the qualifications of any Deacon whom they believe no longer meets the biblical qualifications for the office. Upon receipt of such an accusation, the Elders shall conduct a careful and impartial investigation consistent with Scripture.

Following the investigation, the Elders shall report their findings to the Members. If the accusations are determined to be unsubstantiated, the Elders shall communicate that determination to the congregation, and the Deacon in question shall be restored to his duties with love and compassion. If the Elders determine that the accusations are substantiated and that biblical grounds for dismissal exist, they shall recommend dismissal to the Members.

A Deacon may be dismissed only upon the recommendation of the Elders and the affirmative vote of at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the Members present and voting by secret ballot at a regular or special-called Members' Business Meeting.

- 3.3.6 Term of Service — While Deacons receive lifetime ordinations, they shall be elected to a three-year term of active service on the Deacon body to begin on the date of his ordination. Following that term of service, a Deacon will enter a one-year period of rest.

Following that rest period, the Deacon will once again be eligible to be nominated by the congregation for another period of active service. Terms of active service may be extended with the Deacon's assent should the pool of men qualified and willing to hold the office be insufficient to meet the needs of the Church body.

Section 4 – Church Employees

- 3.4.1 Church employees are employed on an at-will basis. Church employees serve the Church under the day-to-day oversight of the Elders. The Personnel Team shall establish the duties and responsibilities of all employees in writing under the oversight of the Elders. Employees shall receive written notice of their duties and responsibilities, including any subsequent changes.
- 3.4.2 Authority – Employees shall be directly responsible to the Elders or to the director designated by the Elders for carrying out their duties and responsibilities.
- 3.4.3 Compensation – The Finance and Personnel Teams shall jointly recommend to the Elders the compensation and benefits package for each employee. The Elders shall present any approved compensation package to the Members for a vote prior to the hiring of a candidate for an open position. Employees shall receive written notice of their compensation and benefits package before beginning employment.
- 3.4.4 Affirmation – The Elders shall provide notice of the nomination of an employee candidate at two (2) Sunday morning services prior to the vote at a Members' Business Meeting. Employee candidates must be affirmed by a vote of at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the Members present and voting at any regular or special-called Members' Business Meeting.
- 3.4.5 Discipline – Non-ministerial employees (e.g. janitor, receptionist) are not required to be Church Members; however, all employees are subject to disciplinary action to be administered by the Elders and, when applicable, in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17.
- 3.4.6 Termination – The Elders may recommend to the Members the termination of any Church employee whenever they determine such action to be in the best interests of the Church or otherwise warranted. The employment of a Church employee may be terminated by a seventy-five percent (75%) affirmative vote of the Members present and voting at any regular or special-called Members' Business Meeting. Nothing in these Bylaws shall be construed to alter the at-will nature of employment or to create a contract of employment for any definite term.

Section 5 – Ministry Teams (Members & Directors)

- 3.5.1 Purpose – The Elders may establish, modify, or remove Ministry Teams to assist in carrying out and overseeing specific aspects of the life and ministry of MBC as needs arise.
- 3.5.2 Authority – Volunteer Ministry Team members shall be directly responsible to the Elders or to the director designated by the Elders for carrying out their duties and responsibilities. Ministry Team directors provide leadership and coordination for a Ministry Team under the oversight of the Elders.
- 3.5.3 Affirmation – The Elders and Deacons will identify potential Ministry Team candidates from among the Church Members to fill Ministry Team positions—Deacons focusing on teams related to service to the Church body, and Elders focusing on teams related to teaching, education, worship, administration, and Church governance. All Ministry Team appointments must be affirmed by a vote of at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the Members present at any regular or special-called Members' Business Meeting.
- 3.5.4 Discipline – The Elders shall administer any disciplinary action in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17 and pursuant to § 2.5.4.
- 3.5.5 Term of Service – Ministry Team members and directors shall serve terms that run concurrently with the fiscal year. Individuals affirmed for service before the beginning of a fiscal year shall begin their term on the first day of the fiscal year. Individuals affirmed for service during a fiscal year shall begin service upon affirmation and shall serve until the end of that fiscal year. At the conclusion of each fiscal year, Ministry Team assignments shall be reviewed by the Elders and Deacons, and individuals may be nominated for continued service based upon the needs of the Church, the individual's suitability for service, and the individual's willingness to serve. Renewal of service on a Ministry Team is not automatic and shall require affirmation by the Members in accordance with § 3.5.3.

Article IV – Church Meetings

Section 1 – General Expectations and Guidelines

- 4.1.1 Members shall behave in all meetings in a spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration, which is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus. Members shall do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than themselves (Phil 2:3). Members shall strive to make God's glory their passion by delighting in God and enjoying Him in all meetings.

Section 2 – Worship Meetings

- 4.2.1 Worship services shall be held each Lord's Day, weather permitting, and may be held throughout the week as the Church determines. Members shall prepare themselves throughout the week for the corporate worship of the Almighty. The Elders shall determine any cancellations and shall communicate that information to the Members as efficiently as possible.

Section 3 – Members' Business Meetings

- 4.3.1 There shall be a Members' Business Meeting quarterly or as needed. The Elders shall see that the Members' Business Meetings are regularly held and that required reports are submitted to the Church by those responsible. MBC will conduct business as follows: All Members' Business Meetings will be preceded by prayer. It will be the duty of the moderator—an Elder or another Member designated by the Elders—to state and explain motions; and by his vote, to decide questions upon which there is a tie. The business procedure shall be conducted in accordance with the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, except where those rules conflict with Holy Scripture, this Constitution and Bylaws, or any special rules of order adopted by the Church, and will generally follow this order:
1. Presentation and approval (after corrections, if any) of the Minutes of the previous meeting.
 2. Financial Report and approval.
 3. Reports from Ministry Teams.
 4. Reports from Deacons and Elders.
 5. Old business.
 6. New business.
 7. Adjournment.
- 4.3.2 Provided all Bylaw provisions for notification have been met, a quorum for any regular or special-called Members' Business Meeting shall consist of not fewer than twenty percent (20%) of the current active and voting Church membership. Unless

otherwise specified in these Bylaws, all matters requiring a vote shall be determined by the votes cast by Members present and voting. No Member under eighteen (18) years of age may vote, make a motion, or second a motion.

- 4.3.3 The Members reserve the right to bring legitimate matters of Church business before the congregation at a regular Members' Business Meeting. To promote prayerful, orderly, and informed consideration of such matters, any Member desiring to present new business shall submit the proposed business item to the Elders in writing at least two (2) weeks prior to the scheduled meeting.

The Elders shall prayerfully consider each proposed business item, evaluate it in light of Scripture and these Bylaws, and prepare to provide any recommendations or information necessary to assist the congregation in its deliberations. This submission process is intended to promote unity, order, and wise leadership and shall not be construed to deny or diminish the authority of the Members to consider and act upon matters properly brought before the Church.

Any business item properly submitted in accordance with this Section and presented at a Members' Business Meeting shall be open for discussion by the Members and Church officers in accordance with these Bylaws and the rules of order adopted by the Church. New business not submitted in accordance with this Section may be deferred by the moderator until a subsequent Members' Business Meeting.

- 4.3.4 A budget shall be approved by the Members at a Members' Business Meeting not more than three (3) months after the start of the fiscal year, preferably before the start of the fiscal year. If the Members have not approved a budget for a new fiscal year by the beginning of that fiscal year, the immediately preceding fiscal year's budget shall continue as the Church's operating budget until superseded by a budget duly approved by the Members. The Church may amend its budget for a fiscal year as needs arise.
- 4.3.5 Special Members' Business Meetings may be called as required by the Elders. The date, time, and purpose of any special-called meeting shall be announced at all public services of the Church at least one (1) week in advance unless extraordinary circumstances will not permit such notice.

The Members also reserve the right to call a special Members' Business Meeting in the event of extraordinary circumstances materially affecting the life, ministry, or governance of the Church. Examples include:

1. The willful neglect of duty by a majority of the Elders.
2. The unavailability of the Elders due to a catastrophic event.
3. A catastrophic event that substantially disrupts the normal functioning of the Church.
4. Widespread gross immorality involving the congregation or Church leadership materially affecting the peace, purity, or witness of the Church.

A special-called Members' Business Meeting under this provision may be called upon the written request of not fewer than twenty-five percent (25%) of the current active and voting Church membership specifying the date, time, and purpose of the special-called meeting. This written request shall be presented to the available Elders and Deacons who shall verify the signatures and coordinate the scheduling and notice of the meeting. If a majority of the Elders are unavailable or are the subject of the requested meeting, the available Deacons shall perform this responsibility. The meeting shall be scheduled and announced in accordance with the notice provisions of this section.

Article V – Legal Matters

Section 1 – General

- 5.1.1 We believe that the biblical plan for support of the Church is “tithes and offerings.” We believe that the Bible teaches that all our tithes are to be brought into the one treasury of the Church. For the purpose of clear stewardship and accountability, the Church shall utilize a fund accounting system. All general tithes shall fund the unified general budget, while special or designated offerings shall be tracked in specific restricted funds according to donor intent and applicable law. This system ensures the Church remains one in mission while being precise in its financial reporting. All real property donated to the Church shall be presented to the Elders to determine its need, usage, or disposal, with recommendations presented to the congregation for a vote.

Section 2 – Indemnification

- 5.2.1 If a civil claim or criminal allegation is made against a person because he or she is or was an officer, employee, or agent of the Church, the Church shall provide indemnification, via an applicable insurance policy, against liability and costs incurred in defending against the claim if the Elders determine that the person acted in the line and scope of his or her duties in good faith, with the care an ordinarily prudent person in a similar position would exercise under similar circumstances, and in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in the best interest of the Church, and the person had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful. The Church shall purchase appropriate insurance to meet these potential liabilities.

Section 3 – Dispute Resolution

- 5.3.1 Believing that Holy Scripture commands Christians to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian church (Matt 18:15–20; 1 Cor 6:1–8; Titus 3:10–11; Luke 17:3–4), the Church shall urge its Members to resolve conflict among themselves according to biblically based principles, without reliance on the secular courts. Consistent with its calling to peacemaking, the Church shall encourage scripturally-based principles and the avoidance of lawsuits—if at all possible—to resolve disputes between herself and those outside the Church, whether Christian or non-Christian and whether they be individuals or corporate entities.

Article VI – Effectual Power and Amendments

Section 1 – Effectual Power of the Constitution & Bylaws

- 6.1.1 The Constitution and Bylaws shall remain in full force and effect as presently adopted or as duly amended in accordance with the provisions of this Article.

Section 2 – Procedures

- 6.2.1 Proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws may be submitted by any active Member in good standing in accordance with the provisions governing new business in § 4.3.3; however, all proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing. The Elders shall prayerfully review each proposed amendment, evaluate it in light of Holy Scripture and these governing documents, and provide any recommendations or explanatory comments they deem appropriate for the benefit of the Members prior to the vote.

It is the continued intention of this Church to remain faithful to the inerrancy of Scripture and the nature, person, and work of Jesus as affirmed in the Statement of Faith contained in our Constitution. Accordingly, no amendment may be adopted that contradicts, undermines, or weakens the integrity of those doctrines. If any provision of the Constitution and Bylaws is repealed or amended, a complete copy of the prior version shall be kept in the Church records.

Section 3 – Affirmation

- 6.3.1 The Constitution and Bylaws may be amended by an affirmative vote of at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the Members present and voting at a Members' Business Meeting. A copy of the proposed amendment shall be provided to the Members at least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting at which the amendment will be considered, in accordance with the notice provisions of these Bylaws.

Benediction

May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.