

"SHORTER AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH AT A GLANCE"

The word of God states "Where there is no vision, the people perish" Proverbs 29:18. Just the same we know where there is a vision great things can be accomplished for the Glory of God. For this we are truly grateful, for we feel that it was because of a vision for lost souls that this church stands as a friend to the friendless, a helper to the helpless, a source of moral and spiritual power for this city, and most of all an ensign-bearer of our Mighty God, even Christ Jesus.

In October 1932, the need of a revival for this area was felt in the heart of the Reverend K. C. Baker. This revival was conducted by Brother Baker in a rented building at this present location.

After a very successful three weeks meeting Reverend J. W. Southerland, pastor of the Maple Street Baptist Church expressed the need of organizing a Missionary Baptist Church at this place. After prayerful consideration a Church was organized on October 23, 1932 and named "The Tabernacle Baptist Church." It was also known as "Bakers Barn" and "The Billboard Church." These two names because of the Reverend Baker who held the first revival, and because the first pastor, and then because of the large billboard at the sight.

The Reverend J. E. Smith was elected Moderator, and J. N. Crozier as Clerk.

The Presbytery was composed of the following pastors and deacons from other Baptist churches:

J. W. Southerland, J. N. Crozier, S. A. Moak, R. N. Wimpee of Maple Street Baptist Church.
Paul Morris, H. N. Bradshaw, J. E. Smith, R. H. Smith of Pleasant Hope Baptist Church
J. T. Wallace, Fellowship Baptist Church
J. C. Lovell, Pleasant Valley Baptist Church
J. F. Butler, DeSoto Park Baptist Church
K. C. Baker, Lakeview Baptist Church

An invitation was given for membership in the new church, and the following named persons, bearing letters in proper form presented themselves for membership:

Mrs. C. B. Millican, Miss Ruby Brock, Miss Annie Lee Millican,
Luther O. Goodwin Jr., Mr. & Mrs. L. O. Goodwin Sr., Mr. & Mrs.
Jim Brock, Miss Helen House, Mr. & Mrs. Ralph White, Mrs. Emma G.
House, Miss Estelle Payne, James Goodwin, Mrs. Eva Payne, Guy
Goodwin, Mrs. Laura Fairchild, Miss Margaret Goodwin, Miss Ella
Dean Goodwin, and Mr. & Mrs. R. G. Aikens.

The above named then constituted the new Church. The invitation was extended and forty-two more united with the church.

The Reverend K. C. Baker was called as the first pastor and served approximately two years.

The following men were elected as deacons:

E. L. McGill, Chairman, F. J. Wallace, W. E. Childress, Carl Edwards and R. L. House.

The first officers elected to serve the church were:

C. A. Green, Clerk, R. G. Aikens, Superintendent of Sunday School,
R. L. House, Church Treasurer, W. E. Childress, Choir Director.

The store building in which the church was meeting was purchased at a cost of \$1,350.00. Payments were \$13.50 per month. This amount was hard to come by and many payments were raised by donations solicited by Brother E. L. McGill in a house to house canvass.

In 1933 an application for membership into the Floyd County Baptist Association was presented from the Tabernacle Baptist Church by Reverend K. C. Baker. This application was referred to committee for investigation. Later in the day the committee brought in a favorable report as to said church being of true Baptist faith and order be motion duly seconded and carried that church be accepted and received by motion into the Floyd County Baptist Association on September 7, 1933.

Reverend W. M. Slaughter and Reverend Cisero Peek each served as pastor during the period from 1934 to 1936. The Reverend H. F. Joyner served a short term as interim pastor.

In 1936, Reverend S. M. Smith was called as pastor and served only one year. During his ministry plans were made to erect the first church building.

The Reverend W. O. Denson was called as pastor in 1937 and served until 1952. During his capable ministry the following Auxiliaries were organized: B.Y.P.U. with 32 enrolled, W.M.U. which included the Y.W.A.'s, G.A.'s, R.A.'s, and Sunbeams, with a total enrolment of 94. Mrs. Essie Johnson was elected first W.M.U. President. In 1939, Mrs. F. S. Ramsey was elected President and served until 1947. A Brotherhood was organized in 1943 with 38 members. Q. L. Middleton was elected first President of the Brotherhood.

The first Vacation Bible School was conducted in 1944 with an enrolment of 59.

The indebtedness of the first church building was paid in 1944 and the mortgage burned on the last day of the year.

In 1945 the 53rd Session of the Floyd County Baptist Association was held here. There were many visitors, a wonderful meal was served to all. Reverend O. E. Rutland was Moderator, Reverend J. H. Holcomb, Vice Moderator.

During the ministry of Brother Denson the baptismal services were held at Denson's Lake and at Darlington School. It was at this time the largest baptismal service in the history of the church took place, with sixty-two candidates.

Sunday School was conducted in the auditorium of the church. It divided into sections with blue denim given to the church by Pepperell Manufacturing Company. However, during Brother Denson's ministry there were ten Sunday School rooms built to the church.

In August, 1947 the church voted to change the name from Tabernacle Baptist to Shorter Avenue Baptist. Plans were started during Brother Denson's ministry for a new and larger auditorium but was completed during the ministry of Reverend J. H. Holcomb who served the church with a great ministry from 1952 to 1963.

Also during Brother Holcomb's ministry the church made many great advances. The first pastorium was purchased at 112 Delwood Drive at the cost of \$7,250.00. This property was sold in 1961 and a new pastorium purchased at 38 Westwood Circle at the cost of \$21,500.00.

The present auditorium was completed in 1954. Brother Marvin Rogers was chairman of building committee. Brother Ira Armstrong supervised the work which was mostly donated by the men of the church. Brother W. M. Aaron donated the labor for all the electrical work.

The record attendance in Vacation Bible School was reached in 1956 with 271 present.

In 1957, the second addition to the educational building was completed. The work which again was mostly donated by the men of the church under the supervision of Reverend J. S. Breedon.

During Reverend Holcomb's ministry the property at 1408 Shorter Avenue was purchased by the church for parking area.

The church organized the Wilkerson Road Mission in June, 1960.

It was during this great ministry the church organ was purchased and the first paid church secretary was employed.

In 1963 Reverend James Agan was called as pastor and served until June, 1964. During his ministry the church paved the parking area and purchased a dwelling adjacent to the church at the cost of \$11,500.00. It was also during the ministry of Brother Agan that the Youth for Christ was organized.

Reverend S. H. Pendley served as interim pastor from June 1964 to October 1964.

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Reverend Max Tucker our present pastor was called on October 4, 1964.

The church has ordained the following ministers:

1957 - Billy Coulter
1958 - Roland Pearce, Frank Ford
1962 - H. E. Elliott, B. J. Chapman, R. M. Smith

The total value of all church property at present is \$201,000.00.

We have a present membership of 624 and enjoy a wonderful fellowship in Sunday School, Training Union, Brotherhood, W.M.U., R.A.'s, Y.W.A.'s, G.A.'s and Sunbeams.

Our present deacon board consist of:

Loyd F. Bray, Chairman
William Young, Vice Chairman
Raymond Brown
W. C. Adams
J. G. Holder
M. L. Rogers
James Vines
L. L. Murphy
W. D. Kight
Joe Conine
Clinton Espy
James Osborne

In summing up all that has been accomplished over the past years we can only humbly say: "To God Be The Glory, Great Things He Hath Done." Amen.

Respectfully Submitted:
Reverend Max Tucker
E. L. McGill
M. L. Rogers
Clyde Chester
James O'Bryant
Kathleen O'Bryant

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF THE SHORTER AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH, ROME, GEORGIA

PREAMBLE

For the more certain preservation and security of the principle of our faith and to the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the accepted tenants of the Missionary Baptist denomination and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body with respect to its relation to other churches of same faith, we do declare and establish this constitution.

The government of this church is vested in the body of baptized believers who compose it. It shall in no wise be subject to the controls of any other Ecclesiastical body. But it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual council and cooperation which are common among Missionary or Southern Baptist Churches.

We agree to cooperate and work with the Georgia Baptist Convention, the Southern Baptist Convention and its Cooperative Program, until such time as they might depart from the practice and teachings of Gods word, to the extent as to bring reproach upon the church of the living God.

This Constitution and By-Laws supercedes any and all others adopted by this church including the one adopted when the church was organized.

I. NAME

This Body shall be known as the Shorter Avenue Baptist Church of Rome, Georgia.

II. ARTICLES OF FAITH

We, the Shorter Avenue Baptist Church, accept as our Declaration of Faith the New Hampshire Confession of Faith in its entirety. However, to preserve space, a resume is printed. We believe that:

1. The Holy Bible was written by men devinely inspired.
2 Timothy 3:16
2. In the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Matthew 28:19
3. By one Man's disobedience, many were made sinners. Romans 5:19
4. The salvation of sinners is wholly of grace. Eph. 2:8
5. The great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in Him is justification. Acts 13:39
6. The blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel.
Rev. 22:17
7. In order to be saved, sinners must be born again. John 3:3
8. Repentance and faith are sacred duties and also inseperable graces wrought in our souls by the regeneration Spirit of God.
Mark 1:15, 1 John 5:1
9. Election is the eternal purpose of God. 2 Timothy 1:8,
2 Thess. 2:13
10. Sanctification is the process by which we are made partakers of His holiness. 1 Thess. 4:3, 1 Thess. 5:23
11. Real believers endure until the end. John 8:31, 1 John 2:19
12. The Law of God is the eternal rule. Romans 3:31, Romans 8:2
13. The church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers engaged in His work under the leadership of scriptural officers.
Acts 2:41, 1 Cor. 11:2, 1 Cor. 14:12, Matthew 28:20, Phil. 1:1

14. The Church has two scriptural ordinances. (1) Baptism is the immersion in water of a believer. Matthew 28:19, Romans 6:4 (2) The Lord's Supper is a memorial commemorating the death of Christ. 1 Cor. 11:26, Luke 22:19
15. The Lord's Day is the first day of the week. Acts 20:7, 1 Cor. 16:1
16. Civil government is of divine appointment. Romans 13:1, Matthew 22:21
17. There is a difference between the righteous and the wicked. Mal. 3:18, 1 John 5:19, John 8:21, John 3:36
18. At the end of this world judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or in hell. Acts 24:15, Matthew 13:49

III. CHURCH COVENANT

Whereas, it is the incumbent duty of those who are favored with the dispensation of the grace of God to embrace His covenant, acknowledge His government, profess His name and unite together in the faith and fellowship of the gospel.

Having been led as we believe by the spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour and on profession of our faith having been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. [Matthew 28:18-20] we do now in the presence of God, Angels and this assembly most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as on body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love (John 13:34) to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness and comfort and to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship (Hebrews 10:23-25), ordinances, discipline and doctrines (Jude); to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ~~Ministry~~ ^{Ministry}, the expense of the church, (1 Cor. 16:1-2) and relief of the poor (Psalms 41:1-2) and the spread of the gospel to all nations (Mark 16:15).

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions, to religiously educate our children (Proverbs 22:6); to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in our engagements and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage and to be zealous (Titus 2:14) in our effort to advance to the Kingdom of our Saviour.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love to remember each other in prayer, to aid each other in sickness and distress, to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtsey in speech, to be slow to take offense but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Saviour to secure it without delay.

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

IV. BY-LAWS

1. The membership of this church shall consist of such persons as confess Jesus Christ to be their Saviour and Lord and who, after due examination by the church as to their Christian experience, and if coming from other churches, as to their letters of dismission and recommendations, or satisfactory substitutes thereof, having been accepted by vote of the church and having been baptized enter into its covenant.
2. Members are expected, first of all, to be faithful in all duties essential to the Christian life and also to attend habitually the services of this church; to give regularly for its support and its causes and to share in its organized work.

3. Such members as have been actively supporting the church with their prayers, presence and means and who are now in full fellowship with the church and such only, may act and vote in the business transactions of this church. These By-Laws shall be read before each pastor calling.
4. Five percent of the resident membership shall constitute a quorum, except for the election of officers, ten percent and for call of a pastor, twenty-five percent shall be necessary.
5. The continuance of membership shall be subject to the principles and usage of the Baptist Churches. Any member in good and regular standing who desires a letter of dismission and commendation to any other church of like faith and order, is entitled to receive it upon proper request from such churches. Letters will not be granted to individuals except in the cases where they are to become charter members of a sister church being organized. Letters of dismission "without" a recommendation can also be granted upon their request, or the request of another church. The church Secretary shall forward with the letter a list of the activities and qualifications of the dismissed member.
6. Members desiring to have their names excluded from the church roster may do so be personally appearing in any regular conference and making such request. License and ordination papers of such persons will automatically be revoked and if they were issued by this church the individual will be required to return same to the church office.
7. Any person whose membership has been terminated for any offence or reason may be restored by vote of the church upon evidence of his repentance and reaffirmation or if on account of continued absence upon satisfactory explanation.

V. MEETINGS

SECTION I--WORSHIP

1. Public services shall be held stately on the Lord's Day, first day of the week which is Sunday, and on some regular evening of each week.
2. The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least once each quarter, at such time as the church may determine. The ingredients to be used to be unleavened bread and pure unsweetened grape juice (fruit of the vine). This unfirminted.
3. Occasional religious meetings may be appointed by the pastor at his discretion or by vote of the church.
4. We shall forbid the continued use in this church of any translation of the Holy Scriptures other than the King James Version.

SECTION II--BUSINESS

1. At any of the regular meetings for worship, the church may without special notice, act upon the reception of members or upon the dismissal of members to other churches and upon the appointment of messengers to councils, ect. but not upon other business.
2. The pastor may and shall when requested by the deacons, trustees, or a standing committee, call from the pulpit, special business meetings, the particular object of the meeting being clearly stated in the notice. The object having first been thoroughly discussed with the deacon board, and with no other business to be transacted other than stated and discusses.
3. The annual meeting of the church shall be held on Wednesday night following the first Sunday in August at which time the annual reports shall be presented and officers elected and such other businesses transacted as may be specified in the call or authorized in the By-Laws.

4. The regular conference shall be held on Wednesday night following the first Sunday in each month with five percent of the membership necessary for the transaction of business, other than the election of officers and the calling of a pastor. For the percentage pertaining to the election of these refer to Article four under By-Laws.

VI. DISCIPLINE

1. Should any unhappy differences arise between members, the aggrieved member shall follow in a tender spirit the rules given by our Lord in the 18th Chapter of Matthew. In no case shall any member be brought before the church until the foregoing has been thoroughly carried out.
2. Should any case of gross breach of covenant or of public scandal occur, the deacons shall endeavor to remove the offense and if such efforts fail shall report the case to the church. If the church votes to entertain the complaint which must be made in writing, it shall appoint a reasonable time and place of hearing and notify the person thereof, furnishing him with a copy of charges. This also to be conducted according to our Lord's instruction in Matthew 18.
3. At such hearings, the accused member may call to his aid any member of the church as council. If he shall not present himself at the time appointed or give necessary reasons for his neglect to do so, the church may proceed in his absence.
4. All such proceedings shall be precluded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance but should an adverse decision be reached, the church may proceed to admonish or declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the church.
5. In case of grave difficulty, the church will be ready, if requested, to ask the advice of an acceptable council from neighboring sister churches.

VII. CHURCH OFFICERS

PASTOR: A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs and his election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose of which at least one week's public notice shall be given. A pulpit committee numbering 5, consisting of the Chairman of deacons, who shall be the chairman of the committee, with 4 other male members selected by the church to seek out a suitable pastor and their recommendation will constitute a nomination. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one man at a time. Election shall be by written ballot unless otherwise requested by the church. An affirmative vote of three-fourths of the members present being necessary to a choice agreement. The pastor thus elected shall serve until the relationship is terminated by mutual consent. Thirty (30) day notice shall be given by the pastor if he wishes to resign, and likewise a thirty (30) day notice shall be given by the church if for any reason they should ask him to vacate the pulpit.

DEACONS: Realizing the importance and responsibility of the deacons position and that the scriptures point out definitely the duties and qualifications of the deacons, this church has the right to expect the most of its deacons and expect them to strive to fulfill their duties and qualifications.

- (A) The deacons of this church shall serve on a rotating system.
- (B) The active board of deacons shall consist of twelve men.
- (C) Three deacons shall retire from the board each year, this shall be determined as to the length of time they have served on the present board. The three with the greatest number years service on present board shall be rotated off. This shall commence at the end of the first four (4) years of the rotating system which started in 1963.

- (D) Three Deacons shall be chosen by a vote of the church to replace those retiring each year. This voting shall be in the following manner. A printed ballot containing the name of each male member of the church, (2) twenty-one years old and above. These ballots shall be passed out at not less than (4) four regular services of the church prior to voting. This shall include at least (2) two Sunday morning services. The membership shall be asked to select (3) three men from this ballot, by placing an (X) by their choice. The (3) three men receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected, by proper means provided they are willing to serve and meet the qualifications, otherwise the next highest man will be considered. Each ballot shall be signed by the person voting.
- (E) Deacons who have been rotated off the Board shall not be eligible for re-election until (1) one year has elapsed.
- (F) In case a deacon serving on the current Board dies or moves away or for some other reason shall be unable to complete his term, the church, shall in regular conference select a deacon (Previously ordained) to fill the unexpired term. This shall be done by written ballot. Having been announced at least (1) one service prior to voting. The name receiving the most votes shall be elected. At the end of this term which he is elected to finish he may be re-elected to a full term without the (1) year waiting period.
- (G) Deacons uniting with this church from other churches of like faith will not be received on the active Board but shall have a (1) one year waiting period in which to prove himself. Afterwards he may be elected at the proper time in the manner stated in item (D).
- (H) No person shall serve as a deacon until he has been a christian for (2) two or more years and a member of some Baptist church for the same length of time.
- (I) The deacons shall organize themselves as a unit with regular monthly meetings. Eight deacons, or two-thirds of the total number shall constitute a quorum. They may organize themselves into such committees as they deem wise.
- (J) They shall apportion the membership of the church among themselves or make plans whereby the entire membership may have the benefit of the oversight of their brethren.
- (K) In counsel with the pastor, the deacons are to have oversight of the discipline of the church guided always by the principles set forth in Matthew 18:15 and 17, I Cor. 5:9-13, and 1 Thess. 5:12-14.
- (L) The deacons shall serve as a general pulpit committee in the case of the absence or inability of the pastor subject to his advice and in conference with him, they shall provide for pulpit supplies. In any period when the church is without a pastor, a pulpit committee shall be elected by the church to provide for the temporary ministry of the church and to seek a suitable pastor and present him to the church for approval. This committee is described in the foregoing part of this Decorum under the general heading of "Church Officers" then subheaded "Pastor".
- (M) The deacons shall serve as a general finance committee calling to their assistance other members of the church as they see fit. They shall supervise the raising of all money in the church and have supervision over the expenditure of the same which includes the preparation of the annual budget. As such shall be expected to set an example for the church in tithing.
- (N) The deacons, as pastors, should be examples to the rest of the church in faith and practice and teaching of God's word.
- (O) The deacons shall be expected to visit the sick and needy of the membership and follow suit in the example laid down by the first deacons in Acts, Chapter 6.
- (P) The officers of the deacon board shall be elected annually by the deacons themselves.
- (Q) It shall be the duty of the Chairman of deacons, when the church is without a pastor, to assume the leadership responsibility of all church business, and to conduct affairs of the church, that no function be suspended.

The three men that are being rotated off the board will constitute a committee and will work with the pastor and the chairman of the board of deacons to decide whether or not the men selected are qualified as deacons. The pastor and chairman of the board of deacons will be ex-officio members of this committee. It shall be the duty of this committee to recommend to the church names of those chosen prospective deacons, and in no case shall a name be disclosed until the recommendation is given.

TRUSTEES: A Board of Trustees shall be elected each year. This board shall consist of (3) three men, who may be re-elected each year, or new ones may be elected as the body directs.

MODERATOR: The moderator shall be the pastor. In the absence of the pastor, the chairman of the deacons shall preside or in the absence of both the clerk shall call the church to order and a moderator pro tem shall be elected.

CLERK: The clerk shall keep in a suitable book provided by the church a record of the actions of the church except as otherwise provided herein. He shall keep a registrar of the names of members with the dates of admission, dismissal, or death together with record of baptisms. He shall also notify all officers, members of committees, and delegates of their election or appointment. He shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church and give legal notice of all meetings where such is necessary.

TREASURER: The church shall elect a treasurer annually whose duties shall be to receive, preserve, and pay out all money authorized by the church or upon proper vouchers by any one authorized by the church and to transact any other financial business that the church may authorize. The treasurer shall pay promptly all bills properly presented and send at least monthly all money directed by the church to missions and all other denominational causes. The treasurer shall give a monthly financial statement to the deacons in meetings and to the monthly church conference and at such other times as requested.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY: The financial secretary shall be elected annually. He shall receive the empty envelopes after the money has been removed and counted by the ushers and the treasurer. The financial secretary shall keep a current record of all contributions by individuals as provided in the new and improved record system offered by the Baptist Sunday School Board.

MUSIC DIRECTOR: The music director shall provide worshipful music for all services of the church and departments which includes a general oversight and direction of the music, the organizing and training of choirs and congregational singing. The selections of numbers and the publications used in the service shall be left to the discretion of the music director and pastor, with the approval of the church.

COMMITTEES: The nomination committee shall nominate Sunday School Superintendent, Training Union Director, W.M.U. President, and Brotherhood President. These officers will immediately become members of the nomination committee after being approved by the church. This full committee will nominate all church officers and shall be active for the entire church year, at which time the church will elect a new nomination committee. The committee shall include the pastor and chairman of deacons.

AMENDMENTS: This constitution and accompanying By-Laws may be amended by three-fourths vote of the members present and voting at any annual meeting of the church or at a meeting especially called for that purpose. The proposed amendment being inserted in the call but no change shall be made in the Articles of Faith and Church Covenant except by a two-thirds vote of all members of the church present entitled to vote. Said proposed changes having been laid before the church in writing at a business meeting not less than one month before the time of the proposed action and read from the pulpit on the Lord's day next, succeeding such proposal.

We accept Roberts Rules of Order as our Parliamentary Procedure and any item not included in this Constitution and By-Laws will be dealt with according to Roberts Rules of Order.

Respectfully submitted for church approval,
COMMITTEE: M. I. Rogers, William Young, I. F. Bray, Rev. Corbie Yother, James O'Bryant, Rev. Max Tucker, Mrs. Kathleen O'Bryant.

