

BY-LAWS

(This is a sample to assist church leaders in developing or reconstructing By-Laws within a church or ministry context)*

OF

CHURCH NAME

ORGANIZED

THESE BYLAWS WERE ADOPTED ON

_____, 20____

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References: Holy Bible KJV
Hiscox Guide for Baptist Churches
Roberts Rules of Order
A Baptist Manual of Polity and Practice
Webster Collegiate Dictionary

SAMPLE

BYLAWS

PASSION AND PURPOSE

1. The passion of this church is to become a humble and transparent expression of God's grace, to live our lives within an intimate and accountable community and to transform our community and the city by offering the healing of Christ to all people.
2. The purpose of this church is to organize and maintain for the worship of God; for Christian faith and to combine the efforts of individual members in evangelism, missions and benevolences. We shall seek to fulfill this through corporate worship service, and love, by words, deeds and through the ministering to human needs in the name of Christ.

ARTICLE 1 - GENERAL ORGANIZATION

The structure of this organization shall be divided into three (3) branches: Executive, Operations, and Membership.

1. The Executive Branch – this organization shall be comprised of the Pastor, Diaconate Ministry, Joint Ministry, Trustee Ministry, Treasurer and Church Clerk. It shall be the responsibility of this branch to set policies and execute church business as approved by the church.
2. The Operations Branch – this organization shall consist of the church ministries and organizations as approved by the church. It shall be the responsibility of this body to promote the spirituality of the church and its programs under the direction of the Pastor in conjunction with the Diaconate Ministry.
3. Membership – the membership shall approve the budget and all matters brought before the church.

ARTICLE II - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Method of Reception of New Members

All candidates, after due examination by the Pastor and Diaconate Ministry, shall be recommended to the church for membership following the completion of three class sessions for new members.

A. Baptism

Upon profession of faith in Jesus Christ, agreement to adhere to the Constitution and By-Laws of _____ Baptist Church as well as the Baptist Church Covenant, and the completion of new member's classes, persons may become candidates for baptism. Upon being baptized and accepted by the Church, they are given the Right Hand of Fellowship and afforded all rights and privileges of membership in this church.

B. Letter

Any person presenting or promising to obtain a letter of recommendation from another Baptist church may become a part of this church following the completion of new member classes and receiving the approval of the general church body.

C. Christian Experience

Any person who has been baptized but who may have lost his/her membership (through no fault of his/her own) and who desires to unite with this church, will give a satisfactory account of his/her conversion and church life and attend new member's classes prior to being recommended for membership.

Section 2. Stewardship

Members are expected to:

- A. Be faithful in all duties essential to the Christian life.
- B. Be exact in fulfilling obligations and performing promises.
- C. Share in the organized work.
- D. Bring others to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour of their souls.
- E. Give financially according to their means and any pledges made.
- F. Give active support to and promote the stated purpose of the church's program.
- G. Cooperate with the Pastor, officers and committees through personal service in futhering the program of the church.
- H. Attend the services of the church regularly.

Section 3. Rights of Members

All members in good standing may act and vote in all transactions of the church. Such members shall have the following rights:

- A. To serve on committees, participate in any and all church activities, and work in the ministries which can be complemented by their gifts or talents.
- B. To hold and elected or appointed office within the church.
- C. To use the church edifice as a site for special services such as weddings, dedication of infants, and eulogistic ceremonies.
 - 1. Arrangements for use of the church for weddings must be made with the Pastor or, in his absence, with the Chairman of the Diaconate Ministry.
 - 2. Arrangements for dedication of infants must be made with the Pastor.
 - 3. Arrangement for a funeral must be made with the Pastor. Whenever the Pastor is not available, they shall be made with the Chairperson of the Diaconate Ministry.
 - i. The Pastor or, whenever the Pastor is not available, the Diaconate Ministry Chairperson should be notified immediately upon the passing of a member.
 - ii. Funerals may be scheduled for any day except Sunday.
 - iii. The date and time of funerals are to be worked out between the family and the Pastor.
 - iv. All funerals held in the local church shall be closed casket during the service. The deceased may lie in state prior to the service, if desired by the family.
 - v. There shall be no fraternal ceremonies held in the church.
 - 4. Neither the minister nor the church will make a charge for services rendered to regular or inactive members of the church for weddings or funeral services.
- D. The petition for a special church meeting, such a petition must be signed (not by Proxy) by at least Twenty-five (25) members in good standing, and must have the issue clearly stated at the top of the petition. The said person must be presented to the Pastor, or Diaconate Ministry Chairperson in his absence, at least two (2) weeks (Sundays) prior to the date of

the special church meeting. The petition with signatures attached must be posted on the church bulletin board and read at the special church meeting and a copy given to the church clerk.

Section 4. Termination of Membership

Membership may be terminated when:

- A. A member becomes an offense to the church and to its good name by reason of immoral or un-Christian-like conduct, by continuing to break covenant vows or non-support of the church. Sufficient evidence must be presented by the accuser to the Diaconate Ministry. If such evidence merits consideration of termination, the Pastor and Diaconate Ministry will make a recommendation to the church. The church body will make the final determination.
- B. A member asks for a letter of transfer.
- C. A member who has been on the inactive membership list for _____ years and has not been restored to active (regular) membership will be removed from the church roll.

Section 5. Restoration of Membership

- A. Returning to the church for restoration may be restored upon recommendation of the Pastor and or Diaconate Ministry.
- B. Any person whose membership has been terminated for any offense or omission may be restored to membership by the church through the Diaconate Ministry upon evidence of his/her repentance and/or reformation.

ARTICLE III – DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Upon recommendation by the Pastor, Diaconate Ministry and/or a majority of the members, other religious bodies having the same general objectives, the Church may join or become affiliated with other ministries or organizations.

ARTICLE IV – CHURCH OFFICERS AND DUTIES

The New Testament acknowledges only two orders of officers pertaining to the Christian Church. They are Pastors and Deacons.

We believe that Scripture clearly demands high spiritual standards and an exemplary lifestyle for all church leaders. All ordained leadership shall follow the spiritual guidelines found in 1st Timothy 3:1-13.

Section I. Pastor

The Pastor is the chief officer of the church and is entitled to all rights and privileges pertaining thereto. By virtue of the position is an ex-officio members of each department, organization and committee within the church.

A. Section of Pastor

1. The Chairperson of the Diaconate Ministry, so instructed by the church, to select a pulpit committee. The Pulpit Committee shall consist of five (5) no more than seven (7) members of the church, with the Chairperson of the Diaconate Ministry serving as an ex-officio member. The committee shall elect its own chairperson.
2. The Pulpit Committee has the authority to review, investigate and schedule all ordained ministers interested in an appointment at _____ Church. At the end of the third month, the committee shall present a progress report to the church.
3. After a period of time, not to exceed six months, the committee shall reduce the number of candidates to three by means of a vote by the committee membership.
4. These three names are to be presented to the church at a special call church meeting, to be announced two (2) weeks in advance.
5. Upon the acceptance of the three individuals by the church, they are to be contacted by the Pulpit Committee for an interview and scheduled for additional services at _____ Church.
6. After a period of time, not to exceed three months and after the church has had a chance to again hear the ministers, the church shall meet in a specially called session and vote on a pastor.
7. Following the selection of these three candidates and after consultation between the Finance Committee and Pulpit Committee, a salary package will be presented to the top candidate. In addition, the Constitution and By-Laws of the church will be presented at this time.
8. The Pulpit Committee shall allow the pastor-elect not more than ten days to review the information and to decide on accepting the church.
9. If the number one choice of the membership should refuse to accept the church, an offer shall then be made to the number two candidate. In the event of another refusal, the third candidate shall then receive the offer.
10. In the event of refusal by all three candidates, the Pulpit Committee shall then submit three additional names to the church and proceed with item 5 of this section.

B. Qualifications

Those standards as set forth in 1st Timothy 3:1-7 shall constitute the basic qualifications for Pastor of this church.

1. The Pastor shall be a graduate of an accredited college and seminary and shall produce evidence for the same.
2. The Pastor must be of good repute.
3. The Pastor must have knowledge of and experience in the field of church administration.
4. The Pastor must have knowledge of group dynamics and the ability to communicate with all people of all ages, races and levels of education.
5. The Pastor must be an ordained Baptist Minister and must produce a certificate of ordination. He/she may be ordained upon acceptance of the church.

6. The Pastor must be able to produce recommendations from three competent individuals who can attest to the quality of his/her Christian life.
7. The Pastor should be of sound health; both physically and mentally.

C. Duties of the Pastor

As chief administrator of the church, the Pastor shall be familiar with all aspects of the church life. II Timothy 4:1-5 shall serve as a guideline in defining the duties of the Pastor.

1. The duties of the Pastor shall be those common to such office in Baptist Churches. He shall be ex-officio, non-voting member of all ministries and committees. He shall preside at all Church meetings, except business meetings.
2. The Pastor is responsible for leading the church to fulfill its vision and purpose. The head of the church is Jesus Christ and the pastor is the under-shepherd of the church.
3. The Pastor shall be responsible for organizing and implementing all worship services of _____ Church.
4. The Pastor is to preach the Word of God, administer the ordinances, lead in public worship and direct the welfare of the church's need. He must see that no false doctrine is taught or practiced in this local church.
5. The Pastor by virtue of his/her office shall call all business meetings. There shall be a two (2) Sunday notice given, before any Church meeting or special call meeting is held.
6. The Pastor shall be responsible for developing a maintaining good relationships with other churches in the area.
7. The Pastor, in conjunction with the Diaconate Ministry, shall be responsible for developing and presenting to the church for approval such ideas and programs that will serve to enhance the spiritual life of the church or aid in the improvement of life in the community.
8. The Pastor shall assume the responsibility for the supervision of all paid personnel. He/She shall recommend to the Diaconate Ministry and/or Trustees action deemed necessary concerning the possible hiring and termination of all paid personnel of the church.
9. The Pastor, in his absence, is responsible for filling the pulpit during any temporary absences.
10. The Pastor shall not be absent from the pulpit more than one Sunday per quarter in excess of vacation or illness.
11. The Pastor shall be responsible for designing and conducting such training sessions as deemed necessary to aid in the spiritual and social development of all members.
12. The Pastor shall be responsible for regular planning session with the Minister of Music in regard to the music life of the church.

13. Official correspondence to the membership, community and others as necessary shall be signed or cause to be signed by the Pastor and the Church Clerk.
14. Upon accepting the church, the Pastor shall become a *bona fide* member and shall maintain his/her financial obligation.

D. Church's Responsibilities to the Pastor

1. The Church shall pay the Pastor a beginning annual salary. The Pastor's base salary shall be reviewed annually by a designated committee for a possible raise – Incremental Performance Award. Increments shall be based upon the following:
 - a. Annual Federal Const of Living Index.
 - b. Evaluation of productivity, experience, academic and ecclesiastical training, honors, awards, and the church's continued financial growth.
2. The Church shall pay the Pastor's expenses for attending official activities as approved by the church.
3. The designated committee shall review the performance of the Pastor. The committee's report shall be made annually with a copy to the Pastor and Joint Board one month prior to the Annual Church Conference (January). The items to be evaluated will be in accordance with the Constitution and ByLaws as stated under "Duties of the Pastor".

E. Pastoral Rights

1. The Pastor's services in civic, private and community organizations shall be left to the discretion of the Pastor as long as such affiliations do not interfere with the smooth operation of pastoral duties.
2. It is the Pastor's privilege to accept invitations to fill guest pulpits or other engagements when such invitations do not conflict with the standing calendar of the church. In case of conflict, the Diaconate Ministry shall attempt to resolve the issue.
3. The Pastor's vacation will be for a period of two weeks without interrupted pay after six months of service, and an additional two weeks without interrupted pay after one year of service; thereafter, the vacation will be one month without interrupted pay and taken at the discretion of the Pastor, with a minimum of two weeks' prior notification to the Diaconate Ministry.

F. Incapacitation

1. After sincere and prayerful consideration, the Diaconate Ministry may recommend the temporary or permanent termination of the pastoral relationship under the following conditions:
 - a. Blindness
 - b. Inability to walk
 - c. Mental deterioration

- d. General breakdown
 - e. Extended illness
2. In any case of the above forms of incapacitation, and where termination results, interim provisions shall be made not to exceed a period of one year.

G. Dismissal

The church prayerfully hopes that it shall never reach the point of having to dismiss its Pastor. However, if this action should ever become necessary, the following steps should be taken:

1. A formal charge must be submitted in writing to the Diaconate Ministry, signed by the complainant with a copy to the Church Clerk.
2. Upon receipt of the charges against the Pastor, the Diaconate Ministry shall enter into conference with him, explain the charges and give him the privilege of rebuttal.
3. After due consideration has been given to Item 2, not to exceed two months, and the situation persists, the Diaconate Ministry shall then bring the Pastor before the Church for a formal reprimand. His/Her reprimand shall be written with a copy going to the Pastor one to the Chairperson of the Diaconate Ministry, and another to be placed in the church office files.
4. If the problem continues the Diaconate Ministry shall then call a special meeting of the Church for the purpose of voting on the dismissal of the Pastor. Notice of such meeting and its purpose shall be read during the regular church service on two consecutive Sundays. A vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and voting shall make a valid vote for termination. Voting will be done by ballot and counted by three (3) members of the church.
5. The pastoral relationship may be terminated by the Pastor becoming an offense to the church and its good name by reason of:
 - a) Misuse of church funds
 - b) Misrepresentation of the church's name
 - c) Failure to perform the assigned administrative duties
 - d) Adultery while serving
 - e) Drunkenness
 - f) Failure to keep in confidence those things discussed in confidence among the church officers or with any member.
 - g) Failure or inability to perform satisfactory service due to age, physical deterioration or any other reason.
6. If the relationship should be terminated by either the church or the Pastor, maximum termination notice of sixty (60) days shall be given.

H. Pastor Emeritus

When the Pastor has successfully served the congregation with twenty or more exemplary years of service and reaches retirement age of sixty-five (65), the church may consider Pastor Emeritus status.

The recommendation for Pastor Emeritus status may come from a petition signed by at least fifty (50) active members of the church. After receipt of the recommendation, the Diaconate Ministry shall place the matter on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled church meeting.

Section 2. Deacons

The Deacons are the church's spiritual leaders (overseers) who exhibit the spiritual qualification found in Acts chapter 6 and I Timothy 3:1-7 and are selected by the congregation. Next to the Pastor, the highest order of the church officer is that of the Deacon.

A. Number of Deacons

There shall be eight (8) active Deacons for the first two hundred and fifty (250) members and one (1) additional Deacon for each fifty (50) members or fraction thereof.

B. Method of Selection

When the number of active Deacons falls below the allotted number as a result of death, removal, resignation or inactivity, the following steps shall be taken to fill the vacancy(ies).

- a) The membership shall be notified of the said vacancy at least thirty (30) days prior to the last church business meeting of the year (December). Names may be submitted to the Diaconate Ministry by any member of the church.
- b) A review of all eligible candidates shall be conducted by the Deacons. This shall include an interview with all nominees.
- c) Following this review and after consultation with the Pastor, the Diaconate Ministry shall submit their recommendation along with the other eligible candidates to the church at that last meeting of the year.

C. Qualifications

Those standards as set in Acts 6:3 and I Timothy 3 shall constitute the basic qualifications of Deacons of this church. The additional qualifications that must be met are:

1. Candidates must have been baptized and an active member of the _____ Church for at least two (2) years.
2. Candidates must have shown total support of church programs, Bible Study, Prayer and Praise service, church training, missions and outreach visitations.
3. Candidates must have displayed evidence of an understanding of the Biblical truth of stewardship by willingness to share time, talents, and financial support with the church and gospel ministry.
4. Candidates should be teachable and well versed in church administration.

D. Duties of the Deacon

The duties of the Deacons shall be in accordance with the practices of the New Testament as related in Acts 6:1-6. Other duties shall include:

1. Assist the Pastor in the performance of his duties.

2. Be responsible to the church for looking after the welfare of the Pastor.
3. Cooperate with the Pastor in providing leadership for prayer services and devotional periods.
4. Assist the Pastor in visiting the sick, needy and distressed members of the church.
5. Assist the Pastor with the administration of the church ordinances.
6. The Deacons shall provide and guard the unity of the church.
7. The Chairperson of the Diaconate Ministry shall preside at all meetings of the church in the absence of the Pastor.
8. The Deacon of the day shall be on duty for all functions of that following week.
9. A Deacon shall be assigned to each auxillary/ministry to provide spiritual guidance and to ensure the ministry is carried out properly.
10. The Deacons shall make recommendation on all matters to the members during regular church meetings.
11. The Deacons shall maintain their financial obligations to the church.

E. Dismissal

Just as with the Pastor, it is the prayer of this church that a Deacon will never have to be removed from office. However, if the need should ever arise, the steps taken for removal of a Deacon are the same as those listed under Article , Section , Dismissal, paragraphs, 1 through 4. A Deacon may be removed from office if he becomes an offense to the church and to its good name by reason of:

1. Drunkenness
2. Adultery while serving as a Deacon of _____ Church.
3. Misuse of church funds
4. Misrepresentation of church's name
5. Failure to keep in confidence those things that are discussed among church officers in confidence.
6. Other actions that would be an offense to the church and its good name.
7. Persistent failure to attend three (3) consecutive regular meetings without notification.

F. Ordination

Each Deacon shall be ordained by the laying on of the hands as set forth in Acts 6:5-6, unless the person has served previously as a Deacon in another Baptist church.

G. Term of Office

The Chairman of the Diaconate Ministry shall be elected for a period of three (3) years. The Church may allow re-election immediately for another term of a maximum of two terms. After a maximum of two terms a Deacon may not be elected until a year's time of service has elapsed.

The Deacons shall be elected to the Diaconate Ministry for a period of seven (7) years after the qualifications in paragraph C (1-4) are met and voted on by two-thirds of the membership present at a church annual meeting and assume their duties in the Diaconate Ministry on the first day of the month following election.

H. Honorary Life Membership

It shall be pertinent for the church to promote to honorary life membership and retire from the active roll any Diaconate member who by reason of age or infirmities shall, after honorable service, be no longer able to render active service. This shall be done upon the approval of the Pastor, the Deacons and the final approval of the church.

I. Term of Office

The Chairman of the Diaconate Ministry shall be elected for a period of ____ years. The church may allow re-election immediately for another term for a maximum of _____ terms. After a maximum of _____ terms a Deacon may not be elected until a year's time of service has elapsed.

Deacons shall be elected by the church membership for a period of ____ years at the annual meeting and assume their duties with the Diaconate Ministry on the first day of the month following election.

ARTICLE V – JOINT LEADERSHIP BOARD OF THE CHURCH

The official Joint Leadership Board shall be composed of the Pastor, Diaconate Ministry, Trustee Ministry, Church Clerk, Treasurer and Financial Secretary. The latter two if needed.

The existence of this body is exclusively for the purpose of transacting matters of church business between the regular meeting dates of the church body. The body is authorized to act on those matter that would normally come before the general church body and shall report to the church at the next church meeting.

When a matter regarding the hiring, firing and supervising of paid and volunteer personnel cannot be resolved by the Pastor, Diaconate Ministry and Trustee Ministry, this matter shall be referred to the Joint Ministry. If the matter cannot be resolved here. It shall be referred to the church body.

ARTICLE VI – TRUSTEE MINISTRY

The Trustee Ministry is recognized as the guardians of the church. The Trustee Ministry are the elected legal representatives of the church whose names (3) are recorded in the courts as required by law in order that they may legally hold property and rightly administer all revenues derived from the church.

Section 1. Trustee Ministry

A. Number of Trustees and Terms of Office.

The Trustee Ministry shall consist of not less than three (3) or more than seven (7) members of 18 years of age or above, of which three members must be qualified at the court. The Trustees must be recommended and voted on by the membership of the church, in a church meeting or a special meeting.

B. Method of Selection.

When the number of Trustees falls below the allotted number, the following steps shall be taken to fill the vacancy.

1. The membership shall be notified of the said vacancy at least thirty (30) days prior to the church meeting. Names may be submitted to either the Trustee Ministry or to the Church Clerk.
2. A review of all eligible persons shall be conducted by the Trustees. This should include an interview with all nominees.
3. Following the review and after consultation with the Pastor and with Joint Ministry, the Trustees shall submit their recommendations, along with other eligible candidates to the church membership for a vote.

C. Qualifications.

1. It is desirable that men and women being considered for the position of Trustee be of good character, has a reputation of honesty, and should possess thriftiness, good judgment, a progressive outlook, and a basic knowledge in some area of business affairs.
2. To be elected to the Trustee Ministry, one should have been a member in good standing of _____ for at least two (2) years and must have been involved in the ministries of the church and financially committed through tithes and offerings.

D. Duties of the Trustee Ministry

The Trustee Ministry is really a standing committee, appointed for a special purpose. (E. T. Hiscos, pg. 94), other duties of the Trustees are:

1. The Trustees shall sign all deeds, transfers of bank notes, and mortgages upon authorization of the church.
2. The Trustees shall hold in trust titles to property of the church including cash assets and other church property. They shall not dispose of any property unless authorized by the members present at a business meeting duly called of the church.
3. The Trustees shall have the power in consultation with the Pastor to keep all church property in good condition. In the event of emergency or current need, the Trustees in consultation shall have the power to make whatever repairs or adjustments necessary up to \$3000.00 and report the same to the church at the next regular business meeting of the church.
4. The Trustees in conjunction with the Pastor shall take all necessary measure for the protection, management and upkeep of all church properties.
5. Trustees shall be responsible for all current expenses of the church.

6. Trustees in consultation with other ministries or committees shall establish guidelines for the use of church property for all purposes and programs planned by church groups as well as by groups from outside the church.
7. The Trustees shall have the responsibility of writing and posting a "Job Description" on the Church bulletin board for all paid church employees.
8. The Trustees shall evaluate all Church employees annually and recommend to the church body as to the need for the continued employment or replacement of an employee.
9. The Trustees shall decide if there is a need for additional employees and bring this need to the attention of the church body at any regular business meeting.
10. The Trustees shall see that the church building is ready for services and properly closed and secured after all services.
11. The Trustees shall designate the financial institutions where church funds will be deposited and keep a careful watch on the stability of the institution.
12. The Trustees shall supervise weekly tallying of all church receipts, form a counting committee with the assistance of the Finance Committee.
 - a. The Counting Committee will meet weekly or as needed to count the receipts or income of the church
 - b. The Trustees will be responsible for the deposit of these funds.
 - c. Members participating on the Counting Committee should be bonded.
13. Arrange for all repairs to church property not to exceed \$5000 and advise the church when a major repair or improvement seems essential to preserve the value of the real estate.
14. Secure authorization of the church body for repairs of more than \$5000.
15. Act as custodian of all records of church property and assume responsibility for their safe keeping.
16. Keep all buildings and furnishings owned by the church properly insured and maintained at all times.

E. Cause for Removal

Upon recommendation of the Trustee Ministry to the Pastor, a Trustee may be removed by the church for any of the following reasons:

- a) Failure to support the church
- b) Persistent breach of covenant vows
- c) Persistent failure to attend three (3) consecutive regular meetings without notification
- d) Persistent failure to perform assigned duties

- e) Misuse of church funds
- f) Other actions that would be an offense to the church and its good name

ARTICLE VII – DIACONATE MINISTRY

The Deaconess are recognized as assistant officers to the Pastor and Deacons as mentioned by Paul in Romans 16:1-4.

Section 1. Number of Deaconess and Terms of Office

There shall be eight (8) active Deaconess for the first 250 members and one (1) additional Deaconess for each 50 or fraction thereof over 250.

Section 2. Method of Selection

When the number of Deaconess fall below the allotted numbers as result of death, removal, resignation or inactivity, the following steps shall be taken to fill the vacancy (ies).

- A. The membership shall be notified of the said vacancy at least thirty days prior to the last church business meeting of the year. Names may be submitted to the Diaconate Ministry by any member of the church.
- B. A review of all eligible women shall be conducted by the Pastor and Diaconate (Deaconess) Ministry. This shall include an interview with all nominees.
- C. Following the review and after consultation with the final approval being made, these names are submitted to the Joint Leadership Board for recommendation to the membership.

Section 3. Qualifications

The qualifications for membership on the Diaconate (Deaconess) Ministry shall conform to the scriptural standards of the New Testament, I Timothy 3:11, I Timothy 5:10, and those additional standards which follows:

- A. Must have been a member of _____ Church for a minimum of two (2) years.
- B. Shall have shown total support of church programs, Bible study, church training missions and outreach visitations.
- C. May be married, widowed or single but of good report and conforming to parts A and B above.
- D. Shall have displayed evidence of an understanding of the Biblical truth of stewardship by willingness to share time, talents and financial support with the church and gospel ministry.

Section 4. Duties of the Deaconess

As of the New Testament, the major function of the Deaconess is to assist the Deacons and Pastor. Specifically, the Deaconess shall:

- A. Assist the pastor in developing the spiritual life of the women and young ladies of the church for the best possible Christian service.
- B. Cooperate with the Pastor and Deacons in visiting the sick, needy, and distressed members of the church.
- C. Assist the Pastor and Deacons in the administration of Baptism and Communion rites.
- D. Perform such other duties as requested by the Pastor and the Deacons

Section 5. Dismissal

Just as with the Pastor and the Deacons, it is the prayer of this church that a Deaconess never have to be removed from office. However, if the necessity should ever arise, the steps taken for removal of a Deaconess follow.

A Deaconess may be removed from office by becoming an offense to the church and to its good name by reason of:

- A. Drunkenness
- B. Adultery while serving as a Deaconess of _____ Church
- C. Misrepresentation of the Church's name
- D. Persistent breach of covenant vows
- E. Failure to keep in confidence those things that are discussed among the church officers in confidence
- F. Other actions which may be an offense to the church and its good name
- G. Failure to maintain financial obligations
- H. Persistent failure to attend three (3) consecutive regular meetings without notification.

Section 6. Honorary Membership

Upon the recommendation of the Deaconess, the church may promote to honorary life member any Deaconess who by reason of age or infirmities shall, after honorable service, be no longer able to render active service. This shall be done upon the approval of the Pastor, the Deacons and the final approval of the church.

ARTICLE VIII – CHURCH TREASURY

The Church Treasurer shall be elected by the membership. The term of office shall be a maximum of two (2) years upon the recommendation of the Joint Leadership Board, and by a majority vote of the

church. Following this period, the person shall be eligible for re-election. In case of a vacancy, a new Treasurer shall be elected in the same manner.

Section 1. Method of Selection

- A. The membership shall be notified at least sixty (60) days prior to the first of November. Names of candidates are to be submitted to the Finance Committee within fifteen (15) days of notification.
- B. A review of all eligible persons shall be conducted by the Finance Committee. This shall include an interview with all nominees. After the review, the recommendation of the Finance Committee, along with other eligible candidates, shall be sent to the Joint Ministry to be presented to the church body at its regular meeting.

Section 2. Duties of the Treasurer

- A. Treasurer shall receive records of deposits of all monies from the Trustees/Counters
- B. Treasurer reports at the semi-annual business meeting on all financial receipts and disbursements for the preceding period. The Treasurer also makes an annual financial report to the Church. The Treasurer shall make a monthly financial report to the Diaconate Ministry and the Trustee Ministry.
- C. Treasurer's books shall be audited annually by a designated committee appointed by the church or a certified public accountant.
- D. Treasurer shall be bonded.
- E. Church Treasurer shall be Chairperson of the Finance Committee

ARTICLE IX – FINANCIAL SECRETARY

The Financial Secretary shall be elected for a period of three (3) years upon the recommendation of the Joint Leadership Board, and by a majority vote of the church. In case of a vacancy, a new Financial Secretary shall be elected in the same manner.

Section 1. Method of Selection

- A. The membership shall be notified at least sixty (60) days prior to the first of November. Names of candidates are to be submitted to the Finance Committee within fifteen (15) days of notification.
- B. A review of all eligible persons shall be conducted by the Finance Committee. This shall include an interview with all nominees. After the review, the recommendation of the Finance Committee, along with other eligible candidates, shall be sent to the Joint Board to be presented to the church body at its regular meeting.

Section 2. Duties of the Financial Secretary

- A. Financial Secretary shall keep an itemized and accurate account of all monies collected and turned into the Treasurer.

Each auxiliary of the church shall report all monies collected to the Financial Secretary.

- B. The Financial Secretary or designated alternate shall write all checks with a second signature. In an emergency those names that appear on the bank signature cards may write checks.

Section 3. Collection of Money

All money collected by or for the church shall be counted by at least three members of the counting committee and verified by a Trustee on Duty before leaving the church. In the absence of a Trustee the Treasurer or Financial Secretary can verify the money.

Section 4. Expenditure Limitation

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Section 5. Disbursement of Checks

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Section 6. Purchasing Responsibility

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ARTICLE X – CHURCH CLERK

The Church Clerk, a paid employee, shall be accountable to the Pastor and shall be elected for an indefinite period upon a recommendation of the Official Board, and by the majority vote of the church. In case of resignation, the Clerk shall give a thirty day notice so that the church history and all transactions are done in a smooth transition.

Section 1. Duties of the Church Clerk

- A. Church Clerk shall keep complete and accurate minutes of church business meetings and Joint Ministry meetings. The minutes shall be kept in a bound ledger to be housed in the church office/vault.
- B. Copies of minutes shall be prepared within thirty days after all official meetings. Copies shall be distributed to the Pastor, Chairperson of the Diaconate Ministry, Chairperson of the Trustee Ministry and the Church Treasurer.
- C. Church Clerk shall maintain all records in chronological sequence. These records shall be made available to the Pastor as requested.
- D. Church Clerk shall mail all official church correspondence with a signature of the Clerk or Pastor.

- E. Church Clerk shall assume full responsibility for the accuracy and security of church records.
- F. Church Clerk shall maintain an accurate membership roster.
- G. Church Clerk shall be responsible for the preparation of all offering envelope for members.
- H. On leaving office, the Church Clerk shall deliver immediately to the Pastor or Chairperson of the Diaconate all books and documents.
- I. Church Clerk shall work a minimum of 20 hours per week.

ARTICLE XI – SEXTON / CUSTODIAN

The Sexton/Custodian, a paid employee, shall be supervised by the Pastor and shall work under the direction of the Trustees. Flexible hours to accommodate various activities will be adhered to. Major responsibilities are the cleanliness of the church and church building, and accountability for janitorial supplies and equipment.

Section 1. Duties of Sexton/Custodian

- A. Keeping the building clean and in good order.
- B. Make minor repairs which call for minor adjustments and reporting the needed major repair.
- C. The Sexton will be notified of all meetings held in the church and see that rooms are warm or cool and ventilated in accordance with the Season.
- D. Sexton/Custodian should have the doors unlocked at the right time for all legal meetings and services and to lock up the church after all activities of the day or the evening meetings and services have been concluded.
- E. The Sexton/Custodian is to prepare the church for weddings and funerals and clean up afterward.
- F. The Sexton shall be the first one at the church and last to leave, he is to see that church is properly secured before he leaves.

Section 2. Dismissal of Custodian

Upon the recommendation of the Pastor or the Trustees, the custodian may be dismissed for the following reasons:

- A. Dishonesty, disloyalty, discourteousness
- B. Failure to perform assigned duties adequately
- C. Failure to report to work regularly, promptly and remain the entire day unless excused by the Pastor or Chairperson of the Trustee Ministry.
- D. Offensive action (e.g. Intoxication) which reflect on the good name of the Church.

ARTICLE IX – MINISTER OF MUSIC

_____ Church shall hire a Minister of Music. The Minister of Music may be a part time employee. He/She shall work closely with the Pastor in promoting the music life of the church.

Section 1. Method of Selection

When a vacancy occurs for the position of Minister of Music, the announcement shall be made to the church membership through the Pastor and the Diaconate Ministry. Applicants shall be screened by the Music Committee (Chairpersons of each choir). Persons interested in the position of Minister of Music shall submit an application to the committee. An interview shall be held with each applicant by the Pastor with the assistance of the Music Committee. The Pastor shall recommend to the Diaconate Ministry and to the Joint Ministry, then to the church body for election for its choice for the vacancy.

Section 2. Qualifications

Among the basic qualifications for Minister of Music are the following:

- A. Conducting ability
- B. Able to read music
- C. Innate musicianship which includes the “feeling” of rhythms, phrases and harmonic sequences.
- D. Through understanding of church music history.
- E. Knowledge of the essential of vocal production.
- F. Piano/Organ proficiency.
- G. A well-rounded repertoire of vocal, church and instrumental music, especially in the areas in which he/she is actively participating.

Section 3. Duties

The Minister of Music is responsible to the Pastor for planning, conducting, and evaluating the Music Ministry. Among the duties of the Minister of Music are the following:

- A. Organizes and directs the church music program.
- B. Assist the Pastor in the planning of church music.
- C. Trains and develops talent within the church membership
- D. Recruits new members for the music groups
- E. Furnishes music at all regular assemblies, such as morning and evening services, and funerals as directed by the Pastor or in his absence, the Chairperson of the Diaconate Ministry.
- F. Holds regular planning sessions with the Pastor or in his absence, the Chairperson of the Diaconate Ministry, in regard to the music life of the church.
- G. THIS LINE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK
- H. THIS LINE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

Section 4. Church’s Responsibility to the Minister of Music

- A. Church shall pay its Minister an initial annual base salary. The base salary shall be reviewed annually by the Pastor and the Trustee Ministry or Salary Committee, if appointed, for a

possible incremental Performance Award (raise). The increments shall be based on the following:

- a. Recommendation based on the annual Federal Cost of Living Index
 - b. Evaluation of experience, academic and musical training, honors, awards, music productivity, and the church's continued financial growth.
- B. Minister of Music shall be given two weeks vacation with pay each year at a time approved by the Pastor.
- C. Minister of Music shall receive travel expenses and a stipend for out-of-town engagements which have been approved by the Pastor and the Diaconate Ministry when representing the church.

Section 5. Minister of Music's Responsibility to the Church

- A. Minister of Music shall be responsible for the security of all musical instruments used by the choirs.
- B. Minister of Music is responsible for paying persons who serve in his/her absence other than sickness and vacation.
- C. When the Minister of Music finds it is necessary to be absent for any reason, the Pastor or in his absence, the Chairperson of the Diaconate Ministry, shall be notified and informed as to the person who is to serve during the period of absence.
- D. Repair needs and requests for music supplies must be submitted to the Chairperson of the Trustee Ministry.
- E. Minister of Music must submit any grievance in writing to the Pastor and/or Chairperson of the Diaconate Ministry. If the grievance is not resolved through these channels, an appeal may be made to the Joint Ministry and finally to the congregation, if necessary.

Section 6. Dismissal

Upon recommendation of the Pastor and/or Diaconate Ministry, a Minister of Music may be recommended to the Joint Leadership Ministry for removal from office for any of the following reasons:

- A. Failure to hold regularly scheduled choir rehearsal without just cause.
- B. Failure to support the music life of the church by repeated absence from activities on the regular church calendar.
- C. Persistent failure to perform assigned duties
- D. Other actions that would be an offense to the church and its good name.

ARTICLE XIII – MUSIC DIRECTORS/CHAIRPERSONS

The Chairpersons of each church music group shall be selected by the group in cooperation with the Minister of Music. Each Chairperson shall work under the supervision of the Minister of Music. Each Chairperson of a church music group shall work and plan cooperatively with the Minister of Music for the best interest of the music life of the church.

- A. All guest directors shall be approved by the Pastor or, in his absence, the Chairperson of the Diaconate Ministry and the Minister of Music, before any performance in the church.
- B. All guest directors shall be approved in advance by the Pastor or, in his absence, the Chairperson of the Diaconate Ministry, and the Minister of Music.

ARTICLE XIII – CHURCH CHOIRS/MUSIC GROUPS

Worship through music is a pleasant privilege which should animate the dull and sooth the agitated spirit. While it comforts and inspires the saints, more than any other part of the service, it attracts the unconverted and the unbelieving. Church music should be the united expression of the assembly – the worship of all uttered in song. Church music is an act of worship by the congregation itself.

The following are the approved music groups within _____ Church:

- A. Mass Choir
 - a. This choir shall be composed of men and women of the church who are eighteen (18) years of age and above.
- B. Male Chorus
 - a. This Choir shall be composed of all men of the church above eighteen (18) years of age and above.
- C. Youth Choir
 - a. This Choir shall be comprised of girls and boys between the ages of six and seventeen. It shall have an adult advisor.
- D. Other Choirs as needed

Section 1. Duties of the Choirs

- A. Choir members shall be members of this local church
- B. Since the music is a part of the church service and a principle part of its worship, it is very important that a Christian understanding is vital between the choir members and those with whom they work.
- C. Choir members are to wear their robes whenever the church is in session.
- D. Each choir member shall have two (2) full rehearsals before he or she can sing in Sunday morning service.

- E. No choir member is to leave the choir during services unless it is very necessary.
- F. All new members must submit an application before serving.
- G. All choir members must abide by the rules and regulations of the choir and this local church.
- H. Each choir member will sit where the Director feels that his or her voice is needed.
- I. The Organist shall have complete charge of the music department under direct supervision of the Pastor of the local church since the conducting of worship is under his control.

ARTICLE XV – USHER MINISTRY

There shall be an Usher Ministry of _____ Church. The members of the ministry shall be members of the local church.

Any member wishing to become a member shall submit an application to the division of the Usher Ministry the desire to work with. The application should be presented to the Usher Ministry, which should consist of the Chairperson of each Usher division. The group along with the Pastor should review the application for approval before said member is accepted.

Section 1. Duties of the Ushers.

- A. Ushers shall see that members and friends are comfortably seated.
- B. During services the ushers shall direct the members to their seats using the side aisles.
- C. Ushers shall greet the members and provide the bulletins and other materials at the proper time. (prior to being seated)
- D. Ushers shall prepare and collect the offerings at regular Sunday morning services and when requested.
- E. Ushers will serve at all services of the church whenever called upon.

ARTICLE XVI – CHURCH SCHOOL

The relationship of the School to the church. The school is created by dependent on, and controlled by the church, as part of its legitimate work. In this case the church appoints its officers, as it would appoint a committee for any other service. (E.T. Hiscox pg 259)

Section 1. General Superintendent

There shall be a general superintendent, an associate superintendent and such other associate superintendents as shall be deemed necessary.

Section 2. Secretary

There shall be one secretary for the church school. The duties are as follows:

- a. Record all the minutes of the meetings.
- b. Provide the Pastor with a copy of all attendance numbers, changes in programs and functions of the church school.

Section 3. Treasurer

There shall be one Treasurer for the church school. The duties are as follows:

- a. Treasurer shall collect/receive all monies collected from each class
- b. On a monthly basis, the Treasurer should provide

ARTICLE XVII – YOUTH MINISTRY

The Youth Ministry is set up for Christian training and nutrient of the children and youth of the local church and community with sponsors. The Youth Ministry shall have strict supervision under a trained leader, minister or layman under the direct care of the Pastor.

ARTICLE XVIII – CHURCH MINISTRIES

It shall be the function of each of the defined groups in this section to work under the name of _____ Church for uplifting the work of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Furthermore, each officer and member of the group shall work in harmony to bring about a spiritual and/or religious experience for its members and for the entire membership of our beloved church.

Section 1. Church Approval

All ministries shall be approved be approved by the church and shall be subject to the ruling of the church.

Section 2. Financial Procedures

- A. Each group may elect a Treasurer if needed. The group shall make bi-annual reports in writing including their financials through its Treasurer and report the general condition of the group.
- B. The Treasurer of the group shall also report the balance to the group monthly. If money is needed, the Chairperson shall have a voucher drawn by the Financial Secretary signed by the Chairperson and group Treasurer, which will be honored by the Church Treasurer.
- C. At the eand of the church year, the Treasurer of each group shall turn over to the church all monies, other than its working capital, money raised in the name of the church. The group has the privilege of specifying the purpose for which the funds are to be used.
- D. Any monies raised by any group in _____ Church must be made accountable to the church Treasurer.

E. The maximum amount of petty cash a Treasurer shall have on hand shall be \$_____.

Section 3. ByLaws of Church Ministries

Each ministry must have ByLaws for its internal guideline which do not in any way conflict with the Constitution and ByLaws of the church. These By-Laws shall be approved by the Pastor and the Diaconate Ministry.

Section 4. Approved Auxillaries

- A. No individual shall serve concurrently as chairperson of more than one group.
- B. Listed below are the approved organizations for the efficient operation of the Church.

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Christian Education | 1. Hospitality Ministry |
| 2. Sunday School | 2. Nurse Care Ministry |
| 3. Transportation | 3. Outreach Ministry |
| 4. Missionary Ministry | 4. Senior Ministry |
| 5. Usher Ministry | 5. Youth Ministry |
| 6. Pastor's Aide Ministry | 6. Men's Ministry |
| 7. Women's Ministry | 7. Audio Ministry |

- C. Auxillaries/Ministries not included in this document must be approved by the church. Such approval may be granted at either the semi-annual or the annual Church Conference.

ARTICLE XIX – STANDING MINISTRIES

Certain standing ministries are essential to the efficient operation of _____ Church.

Section 1. Church Approval

All standing ministries shall be approved by the Joint Ministry of the Church and shall be subject to the ruling of the Church.

Section 2. Operational Procedures

- A. The chairman of each committee shall be elected by the committee.
- B. No business shall be transacted unless a quorum is present. (A quorum shall be two-thirds of the committee members.
- C. Any committee having assembled with a quorum to transact business shall have the power if the chairman is absent, to elect or to select a person from the group and to proceed with the meeting.
- D. Any member of a standing ministries who deliberately or habitually absents himself/herself from three consecutive meetings without notification shall be summarily excluded from the

committee, and the group shall proceed with its business with the remaining members until the vacancy is filled.

Section 3. Approved Standing Ministries

The following should be standing ministries of _____ Church:

1. Auditing
2. Finance
3. Constitution Amendments
4. Nominating Committee

Other ministries shall be formed as deemed necessary.

ARTICLE X – MEETINGS

Refer to Church Constitution

ARTICLE XX – RULES OF ORDER

The business meetings of the church shall be governed by Hiscox's new Directory for Baptist Churches, a copy of which must be available at all church meetings.

ARTICLE XXI – FUNERALS

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ARTICLE XXII – CHANGES AND AMENDMENTS

Articles of these By-Laws may be amended or changed by a two-thirds vote of the membership present at the annual business meeting of the church, provided that a one month public notice shall have been given prior to the meeting. The public notice shall be posted on the bulletin boards and announced in the church bulletin each Sunday until the time of the meeting. The proposed amendments shall be stated on the bulletin board.

ARTICLE XXIII – EFFECTIVE DATE

This Revised Constitution and By-Laws becomes effective immediately on the date of its adoption by the church membership at a regular Annual Church Meeting.

SAMPLE