



# CONSTITUTION & BY- LAWS

# Constitution and By-Laws

Vision Baptist Church

## CONSTITUTION

### ARTICLE I Name

The name of this church shall be VISION BAPTIST CHURCH INC

### ARTICLE II Foundation, Object and Priorities of Ministry

1. The foundation of this Church is the Lord Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 3:11), and its code of guidance in all its affairs, the Word of God, and this Church does here affirm its faith that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of Almighty God (Mark 13:31).

2. The object of this Church shall be to worship God according to the teaching of His Word, to practice the precepts and examples of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ as set forth in the New Testament, to sustain its ordinances and doctrines and to preach and propagate among all peoples the Gospel of Salvation which is by personal faith on Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

3. The priorities of ministry of this church flow from the vision of God's glory revealed in Jesus Christ. We exist to savor this vision in worship (John 4:23), strengthen the vision in nurture and education (I Corinthians 14:26 ; II Peter 3:18 ), and spread the vision in evangelism, missions, and loving deeds (I Peter 2:9; 3:15 ; Matthew 28:18-20; 5:16).

## AFFIRMATION OF OUR FAITH

### What We Believe About...

#### The Bible

We believe that the BIBLE is the WORD OF GOD, and that it is divinely inspired. We believe in the plenary, verbal inspiration, that it is the only complete and final revelation of the will of GOD to man, and the supreme, infallible authority in all matters of faith and conduct. We use the King James Bible for all teaching and preaching. II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:20,21; Mark 13:31; John 8:31,32; John 20:31; Acts 20:32

#### God

We believe in the Trinity, the unity of the Godhead. There are three persons: The FATHER, The SON, and The HOLY SPIRIT. They are equally perfect in every divine quality, and execute distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption. (A) We believe in GOD the FATHER (B) We believe in JESUS CHRIST (C) We believe in the HOLY SPIRIT. Genesis 1:1,26; John 1:1,3; Matthew 28:19; John 4:24; Romans 1:19,20; Ephesians 4:5,6

### **The Father**

We believe in God the Father, an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love. We believe that He infallibly foreknows all that shall come to pass, that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ. Luke 10:21,22; Matthew 23:9; John 3:16; 6:27; Romans 1:7; I Timothy 1:1,2; 2:5,6; I Peter 1:3; Revelation 1:6

### **Jesus Christ**

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people, and His personal visible return to earth. We believe Jesus is God. Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38; John 1:1; 20:28; Romans 9:5; 8:46; II Corinthians 5:21; I Peter 2:21-23; John 20:30, 31; Matthew 20:28; Ephesians 1:4; Acts 1:11; Romans 5:6-8; 6:9,10; Hebrews 7:25; Hebrews 9:28; I Timothy 3:16

### **The Holy Spirit**

We believe in the person of the Holy Spirit who came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify, and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Christ, and that He is an abiding helper, teacher and guide. John 14:16,17,26; 15:26,27; John 16:9-14; Romans 8:9; I Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; Galatians 5:22-26

### **Man**

We believe that all men by nature, choice and practice are sinners, but that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." We believe, therefore, that those who repent of their sins and by faith receive Christ as Lord and Savior will rejoice forever in God's presence, and those who refuse to receive Christ as Lord and Savior will be forever separated from God. John 3:14; 5:24; John 5:30; 7:13; 8:12; 10:26; Romans 9:22; 2 Thessalonians 1:9; Rev. 19:3,20; 20:10,14,15; 21:18; Psalm 51:7; Jeremiah 17:9; James 1:14; Romans 3:19; 5:19; Proverbs 28:13; I John 1:9; John 3:16; John 1:13; II Corinthians 5:17; Romans 8:1

### **Eternal State**

We believe in a literal Heaven, the eternal home of the redeemed. We believe Heaven to be the literal place where the saved will live forever in the eternal bliss and blessings of God. We believe in Hell, the Christ-less eternity for the lost, where there will be burning and tormenting for those without salvation, who have refused to receive the gospel and Jesus Christ as Lord. We believe that Hell, unbelievers, Satan and all the fallen angels shall be cast into the lake of fire to be tormented day and night forever and forever. Matthew 13:41-43 Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-24; John 14:2; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Revelation 21-22

## Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord. Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14, 29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9, 28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18, 29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18, 30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8, 14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

## Baptism

We believe in baptism by emersion after salvation with no merit for salvation in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (Spirit). We reject infant baptism and any form or sprinkling for infants or adults. Baptism is an outward expression of our faith in Jesus Christ and a public testimony of what God has done by his grace an inward reality. **Romans 6:1-5; Acts 8:36-38; Acts 2:41; Matthew 3:16; Matthew 28:19-20**

## The Church

We believe in the local church, consisting of a company of professing, born-again believers in Jesus Christ, immersed on a credible confession of faith, and associated for worship, work and fellowship. We believe that to those local churches we are committed, for perpetual observance of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and that God has laid upon these churches the task of proclaiming to a lost world the acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and the enthroning of Him as Lord and Master. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture. **Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:42; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Ephesians 2:19-22; Ephesians 5:19-21; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 10:23-25.**

## The Relationship between Church and State

We believe that every human being is responsible to God alone in all matters of faith; that each church is independent and autonomous and must be free from any ecclesiastical or political authority; therefore, Church and State must be kept separate as having different functions with each fulfilling its duties free from the dictation or patronage of the other. **Matthew 22:21; Mark 12:17; Luke 20:25; Acts 5:29; 1 Timothy 2:5; Romans 13:1-7; 14:7-9,12**

## Spiritual Gifts

We believe that spiritual gifts are given to the church for the express purpose of winning the lost and edifying other believers. The Holy Spirit is given to each believer upon acceptance of Christ and His purpose is to exalt and bring people to Christ. Speaking in tongues was the least important of these gifts and was given as a sign for unbelieving Jews. That is why Vision Baptist Church does not teach or practice speaking in tongues. **John 7:37-39; 14:17; Acts 2:38; 1 Corinthians 1:22; 3:16-17; 6:19-20; 12-14**

# ARTICLE VI

## Organization of Members for Ministry

Members of this church shall have the liberty to participate in and organize themselves for ministry, provided that such participation and organization does not conflict with Article II of the Constitution. Any such organization may seek church sanction from the leadership of the church as an official ministry of Vision Baptist Church. Such sanction shall be granted provided that 1) the object, purpose, belief and conduct of the organization and its members is consistent with Article II of the Constitution, and 2) the primary officers of the organization are: members of the church, or other regular attenders of the church who have been approved under guidelines established by the leadership of the church. Sanction by the leadership of the church does not necessarily imply support of the organization by the church with personnel, finances, or facilities. Such support may be requested as provided by the leadership of the church.

# ARTICLE VII

## Discipline

The discipline of members shall be a responsibility of the leadership of the church under such rules and procedures as the church may from time to time establish on the basis of Scripture. All such proceedings shall be guided by a spirit of prayer mingling Christian kindness, forbearance, and holy firmness under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

# ARTICLE VIII

## Amendments

### GENERAL.

Amendments to these By-Laws may be introduced through written motion at any annual or men's meeting, but shall not be acted on until the following men's or annual meeting, at which time an affirmative vote of the majority of the membership of the Church, or a two-thirds majority of those members present at the meeting and voting shall be required for acceptance; provided, however, that at least ten percent (10%) of the membership of the Church be present at such meeting, and that notice of the proposed change or amendment be given from the pulpit on at least two Sundays and in writing to the resident membership in the interim period between the meetings.

#### **Section 4 ACCOUNTS**

Financial receipts from all sources shall be accounted for by the Treasurer and staff according to the purposes for which contributions are designated. The Treasurer of the Church shall disburse these funds promptly according to the financial program of the Church as detailed in the Budgets or other authorized designations. All moneys for missions shall be remitted in accordance with the Mission Budget of the Church or otherwise designated, preferably each month and not less than each quarter.

#### **Section 5 INDEBTEDNESS**

No note or contract exceeding 1% of the total annual budget whereby the credit of the Church is pledged shall be made except by recommendation of the leadership of the church and approved by the Church.

## **ARTICLE V Meetings**

#### **Section 1 FOR WORSHIP**

Public services shall be held on Sunday and midweek. The Lord's Supper shall be celebrated at such times as the leadership of the church may determine. Other religious services may be appointed as the advancement of the work of the Church may require.

#### **Section 2 FOR BUSINESS**

- a. The Annual Meeting. The annual meeting shall be held some time during the last month of the fiscal year of the Church for the purpose of reviewing proposed budgets and other business. Officers called at the annual meeting shall assume their duties at the beginning of the new fiscal year.
- b. Monthly Meetings. Monthly men's meetings of the church shall be held to inform the men and consult with the pastor and staff.
- c. Special Meetings. The leadership of the church or any ten members in good standing, may call for a special meeting. Notice of the meeting shall be given from the pulpit or by other notification, the particular object of such meeting being clearly stated in the notice. In the calling of special meetings for purposes where an interval after advance notice is required by provision in these By-Laws or according to law, such provisions shall be observed. Notice shall be given at least one week in advance for meetings on specially important matters not otherwise provided for.
- d. Quorum. Any number of members shall constitute a quorum at any ordinary meeting of the Church. At meetings dealing with particular matters stipulated in these By-Laws, the quorums prescribed shall apply.
- e. Rules Governing Business Meetings. Robert's Rules of Order shall be recognized as the general pattern for the conduct of the business meetings of the Church. Seeking the Lord's wisdom and blessing through thankful prayer shall be a part of every meeting.
- f. Notice Provisions. Unless specifically defined in other sections of these By-Laws or the Constitution, "resident membership" means those members who reside within 75 miles driving distance from the church building, "notice . . . in writing" means a written announcement sent by regular U.S. mail, and "notice . . . from the pulpit" means an oral announcement at each of the Sunday morning services.

#### **Eternal Security**

We believe in the eternal security of all blood-bought individuals or believers and that such inheritance is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that each believer is kept by the power of God and nothing can separate us from Him, ourselves included. We believe that believers can lose the joy of fellowship with God, can grieve God and can quench the Spirit of God in him or her, but not lose his/her salvation. **John 3:16; 5:24; 6:37-39; 10:27-30; Romans 8:35-39; Philippians 1:6; Titus 1:2; 1 Peter 1:5; 1 John 5:11-13; Jude 24**

#### **World Evangelism**

We believe that the Apostolic office ceased with the death of the Apostles. We believe that it is His church that He promised continual existence, to continue the work He started until He comes again. We believe that the ministry of reconciliation is committed to every believer and all are saints/priests of God. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. **Matthew 16:18; 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:18-21; 1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:6; 5:10**

#### **Second Coming**

We believe in the literal return of Jesus Christ in the clouds to take all saved people from the earth before the beginning of the Tribulation period. We believe in the bodily/visible return of Jesus Christ with his saints at the close of the Tribulation period to rule and reign for a thousand years on earth. We believe that unbelievers will face and be judged by God at the Great White Throne Judgment according to their works, not for salvation, but for their proper and rightful places in the lake of fire. **Matthew 16:27; Mark 14:62; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; Phil. 3:20; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; II Timothy 4:1; Titus 2:13; I Corinthians 4:5; I Corinthians 15; II Thessalonians 1:7-10; Revelation 4:1; Revelation 20:4-6,11-15**

#### **Biblical Separation**

We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord; and that separation from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices and associations is commanded of God. **II Timothy 3:1-5; Romans 12:1-2, 14:13; I John 2:15-17; II John 9-11; II Corinthians 6:14-7:1**

# OUR CHURCH COVENANT

1. Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God, angels and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.
2. We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love, to strive for the advancement of this Church in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the Church, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.
3. We also engage to maintain family and personal devotions; to educate our children in the Christian faith; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment, to avoid all tattling, backbiting and excessive anger; to seek God's help in abstaining from all drugs, drink, and practices which bring unwarranted harm to the body or jeopardize our own or another's faith.
4. We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.
5. We moreover engage that when we remove from this place, we will, if possible, unite with a church of like faith where we can carry out the articles of this confession and the spirit of this covenant.

## ARTICLE III Membership

The membership of this Church shall consist of persons who confess faith on the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior, who give evidence of regeneration by a living consistent with their profession and with the views of faith, doctrine and practice of this Church, who have been baptized by immersion and who have been received into its membership according to the By-Laws of this Church.

support and promote the ministry of the Word, new and existing ministries of the Church, and the care for the members of the congregation. Their responsibilities may include:

1. Administering a fund to assist the poor and needy and otherwise providing aid in times of crisis or distress;
2. The greeting and welcoming ministries of the church;
3. Assisting in administering the ordinances of the Gospel;
4. Assisting at fellowship gatherings of the church;
5. Caring for and maintaining the Church properties;
6. Administering the business affairs of the Church that pertain to its material assets.

d. Organization. The Deacons shall organize themselves however they determine to be best to achieve the mission of the church. The Deacons may designate any specific Deacon or group of Deacons to specialize in some particular Deaconal function. Meetings of the Deacons, or subcommittees thereof shall be held as needed to best fulfill the responsibilities of the Deacons.

## ARTICLE III Church Employees

In addition to Vocational Pastors and Ministers, the church may employ additional personnel. The moneys for such personnel must be approved by the finance committee at a properly called business meeting. The leadership of the church shall be responsible for determining the duties of and hiring such personnel.

### ARTICLE IV Church Finances

#### **Section 1 IN GENERAL**

All funds donated for missions by the societies and organizations of the Church shall pass through the Church Finance Secretary and the Treasurer in order that due record may be made and credit given to the Church. The leadership of the church shall provide assistants for the Financial Secretary in accounting for funds donated.

#### **Section 2 CONTRIBUTIONS**

It is understood that membership in this church involves financial obligations to support the Church and its causes with regular and proportionate giving. Each member shall be encouraged in Scriptural giving, with tithing as the ideal minimum. Special offerings may be sought by the Church, or by any of its organizations, with the approval of the leadership of the church. This shall not preclude individuals from making special offerings or designated gifts at any time as the Spirit of God may move them.

#### **Section 3 FINANCIAL PLANNING**

The financial planning of the Church shall be carried out through the medium of annual budgets for carrying out of the various programs of its work. Annual budgets shall be adopted by the Church upon recommendation of the financial committee of the church. Matters involving staff compensation shall be the responsibility of the finance committee.

committee, who shall be appointed by the Pastor. The Pastor and leadership of the church may delegate the responsibility for selecting the chairperson to the Deacons or to the committee. (For example, such committees and positions may include a Missions Committee and a Christian Education Committee, among others.)

### **Section 2 PASTOR AND Staff**

a. Definition. The Pastor and Pastoral staff are the ordained Ministers of the church, who in response to God's call, have devoted their vocational lives to the ministry of the Word and prayer in the service of the church of Christ. Staff may also refer to the non-ordained ministers of the church who, in response to God's call, serve the church of Christ as their primary vocation. Both the Pastor and Staff members may be supported financially by the church in return for their vocational labors.

b. Duties. In addition to the duties of their office as described below, the Staff shall perform the duties determined by the Pastor and approved by the congregation. The duties shall be in writing at the time of the call to service, and substantial changes shall be approved by the pastor. The staff may be filled by people who are not necessarily called to the ministry, but as assisting partners in the ministry.

c. The Pastoral Call by the Church. The members shall call the Pastor (1) by ballot upon recommendation of the leadership of the church and (2) by at least a two thirds majority of those members voting at the meeting with at least ten percent (10%) of the membership of the Church present. Oral notice of any such meeting, stating its object, shall be given from the pulpit on the next two successive Sundays preceding the meeting. Notice shall also be given by mail to the resident membership at least one week before the meeting.

d. Termination of Vocational Call by the Church.

1. By resignation. The question of terminating the vocational call of the Pastor shall be considered at any time by the church upon the presentation of the Pastor's resignation.

2. Grievance. Where a grievance exists against the Pastor, either due to his preaching or teaching contrary to the beliefs of the Church as set forth in Article II of its Constitution or to alleged conduct on his part unfitting a man of God, such grievance may be brought before the pastor of the church by any member in good standing, following the procedure prescribed in Article V of these By-Laws. If the leadership of the church, after thorough investigation and consideration, believes the grievance to be true and substantial, then the vocational call of the Pastor may be terminated at any business meeting upon the recommendation of the leadership of the church when supported by closed ballot of a majority of those members of the Church present and voting with at least ten percent (10%) of the membership of the church present at such meeting. Oral notice of any such meeting, stating its object, shall be given from the pulpit on two successive Sundays next preceding the meeting. Notice shall also be given by mail to the resident membership at least one week before the meeting.

### **Section 3 DEACONS**

a. Composition, Term, and Calling. The Deacons shall be men. The number of Deacons shall be determined by the needs of the ministry and by the call and qualification of men in the church. Each Deacon shall be called by the membership of the Church to a normal term of three years.

b. Qualifications. Deacons and nominees for Deacon shall be qualified for the office as specified in the Bible. Relevant texts include I Timothy 3:8-12.

c. Responsibilities. The Deacons shall advise and be ready to assist the pastor in any service that shall

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **Leadership and Organization**

1. Under the authority of Jesus Christ and the Word of God, the Congregation of the Church is the final authority within this local Church. This authority is normally exercised through the election of officers to govern the Church. However, the vote of the membership of this Church at a properly called meeting, as provided in the By-Laws, shall be required to effect the following actions:

- a. Accept members into the Church, give letters of transfer or recommendation to members, or drop members from the Church roll;
- b. Elect officers of the Church;
- c. Discipline members by dismissing them and discipline officers by removing them from office;
- d. Approve annual budgets of the Church, authorize any expenditure of the funds of the Church when such expenditure is not covered by an approved budget, and approve any transactions regarding real property;
- e. Accept, reject, or otherwise dispose of any matter submitted to the membership of the Church by the Pastor, or raised by motion at a business meeting;
- f. Adopt, amend, or repeal the Constitution or By-Laws of this church;
- g. Approve the call of the Pastor.

2. The offices of the Church shall be Pastor and Deacon. The purpose of the officers of the Church is to lovingly govern, care for, and equip the membership to do the work of the ministry.

3. The leadership of the Church shall be vested in the Pastor who is responsible for governing the Church, teaching the Word and tending the flock of God in this Church.

4. Deacons shall assist the Pastor by performing services of advice, administration and implementation.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **The Church Property**

1. In the event of a division of this Church, from which may God in His mercy save us, the property of this Church shall belong to that group of such division as represents the largest portion of the Church membership before recognizing a division therein provided such group is loyal to this constitution; otherwise it shall belong to the group remaining loyal to this constitution though it may not be the largest group in such division.

2. Should a condition arise at any time in the future when for any reason, the Church work cannot continue, the Church property shall be transferred to a church of like faith and order or once disposed of be given to faithful missionaries.

3. Should conditions arise where a consolidation with another church of the same faith and practice be advisable, the Pastor shall be authorized by the Church to negotiate the terms of such consolidation in so far as the property of this Church is concerned.

# ARTICLE VI

## Revisions, Additions and Amendments

1. Revisions, additions or amendments of this constitution may be made only in the following manner:
  - a. at the annual meeting; and
  - b. by a majority vote of the membership, or a two-thirds majority of those members present and voting at such meeting, provided at least ten percent (10%) of the resident membership of the Church is present at such meeting; and
  - c. after presentation by written motion at a special business meeting held at least three months before the annual meeting; and
  - d. if notice of the proposed change or addition has been given, in writing and from the pulpit on at least two Sundays in the interim period between said meetings.
2. Article II (1) and VI (2) of this constitution shall not be repealed, amended nor revised.

## By-Laws

### ARTICLE I Membership

#### Section 1 GENERAL PROCEDURE

All actions regarding membership, either of admission or dismissal, shall be by vote of the Church upon recommendation of the Pastor. At any of the regular meetings for worship, the Church may, without special notice, act upon the reception of members, or upon transfer of members to other churches. Reception of members may, without special notice, be acted on by groups, within the Church, more limited than the full membership of the Church, using procedures specifically authorized by vote of the Church at a regular business meeting upon recommendation of the Pastor.

#### Section 2 ADMISSION BY BAPTISM

Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, giving evidence of change of heart, and having accepted the faith, aims and ideals of this Church as expressed in the affirmation of Faith and Church Covenant, may be received into membership by baptism

#### Section 3 ADMISSION BY LETTER

Members from other Baptist churches holding like faith may be received as members with us upon presentation of letters of transfer from such churches, and upon acceptance of the faith, aims and ideals of this Church as expressed in the Affirmation of Faith and the Church Covenant. If such credentials be of older date than six months prior to their presentation, the applicant may be required to furnish additional information.

#### Section 4 ADMISSION BY EXPERIENCE OR RESTORATION

All applicants for membership other than by baptism or by letter of transfer, that is by Christian experience if previously baptized, or by restoration, shall be received into the church in the same way as those by baptism, except the ordinance shall not be administered.

### Section 5 INSTRUCTION TO NEW MEMBERS

All persons uniting with this Church in any of the ways set forth in Sections 2 through 4 above shall previously, by the Pastoral staff, be made acquainted with the Church Covenant and the Affirmation of Faith. New members shall dedicate themselves to fulfill their stewardship obligations as to worship, service, and giving, when they make public profession of faith and join the church.

### Section 6 DISMISSAL OF MEMBERS

a. Members in good standing who have fulfilled their obligations to the Church, or satisfactorily arranged the same with the Pastor, shall upon request be granted a letter of transfer to unite with such Baptist Church as they may designate. Such letter of transfer shall be sent to the Pastor or the Clerk of the Church the member intends to join and shall be valid only for six months, but may be renewed after that time by vote of the Church upon recommendation of the Pastor if satisfactory reasons be given for the non-use. These limitations of time shall be included in the letter of transfer. Members who shall unite with another church without such letter shall be dropped from the Church roll. Members in good standing who have fulfilled their obligations to the Church, or satisfactorily arranged the same with the Pastor, and who desire to unite with a church of another denomination, shall receive a certificate of character and be dismissed.

b. Members who move from this city, shall supply the Church with their new address and apply for a letter of dismissal within one year provided there be a church of the same faith and order in the place to which they move. If necessary, it shall be the duty of the Pastoral staff to remind such member of their duties in this respect. In case there is no such church in the place, or there are circumstances which render it inadvisable to change membership, the member shall report to the Church as often as once a year at least, in person or by letter and by contribution. All non-resident members who do not so report shall be subject to dismissal by the Church after appropriate efforts have been made to contact the member and remind them of their duties.

## ARTICLE II Church Government

### Section 1 GENERAL STATEMENT

a. Officers. The Officers of the Church shall be the Pastor and Deacons. Officers shall be called to office by vote of the membership of the Church as provided for in Article II, Section 2 and Section 3 of these By-Laws. All officers of the Church shall be members of the Church in good and regular standing. The Deacons shall be composed of men. The Deacons are the only body and position created by these By-Laws.

b. Clerk and Treasurer. The Church, upon nomination by the Pastor shall elect at the annual meeting, members to the positions of Church Clerk and Treasurer. The church leadership shall provide a written description of duties to the Clerk and Treasurer.

c. Committees and Appointees. The Pastor has the authority to create committees and positions to which it may delegate any specified aspect of its responsibility. The leadership of the church has the authority to dissolve any committee or position which it created. The Pastor has the authority to appoint Deacons or other members of the Church to serve as members of such committees and to act as its agents in such positions. The Deacons may nominate candidates for any committee or position, with appointment by the Pastor. The Pastor may delegate to the Deacons the authority to appoint Deacons or other members of the Church to serve as members of such committees and as agents of the Pastor in such positions. Every committee shall have a chairperson, responsible for the overall operation of the