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## **REVISED CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS**

### **ST. PAUL'S BAPTIST CHURCH**

#### **ARTICLE I**

The name of God's church shall be the St. Paul's Baptist Church, and it is located in West Chester, Pennsylvania. For purposes of this document, it will be referred to many times as "the Church".

#### **ARTICLE II**

##### **Mission**

As called people of God, united in Christ's love, that have chosen to align with His will, it is the mission of St. Paul's Baptist Church to **proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ by word and deed.**

We shall minister to the needs of our brothers and sisters in Christ, to those in the community, and shall work together to spread the gospel throughout the world.

#### **ARTICLE III**

##### **Purpose**

Recognizing Jesus Christ as the only Head of the Church, this congregation shall seek to ascertain and to obey the will of our Lord in all matters of faith and practice. Authority to reach decisions for governing the affairs of this church being given to us by Christ, we hold that such oversight and responsibility is vested in the active membership of the congregation.

In carrying out the wider ministry for which Christ has made his church responsible, we shall be a member of at least one convention, which may include but is not limited to the Progressive National Baptist Convention, National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc., or the American Baptist Convention. This church shall also be in cooperation with the larger Christian fellowship at the state and local level to fulfill the Great Commission of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ through preaching, teaching and healing.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **Doctrine**

St. Paul's Baptist Church accepts the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired record of God's revelatory actions in human history and as the authoritative basis for its doctrine and practice. The confession of faith drawn up and adopted by this church is regarded as an expression of the essential doctrines of faith as set forth in the Scriptures. This document shall be subject to revision by the congregation as new insights from the Word of God shall indicate ways in which our faith and life may be brought into closer accord with the teachings of Scriptures.

It is our belief that the Holy Bible is the one document of faith and it was written by men divinely inspired without any mixture of error. It is the supreme standard against which all humanities are to be judged. We believe that there is only one God and He is the perfect Creator and Ruler of the universe. We embrace the idea of the Holy Trinity in which God, his son Jesus, and the Holy Spirit exist as the three distinct entities in one essential holy being. We further believe that man was created as a perfect being by God as recorded in Genesis. Man, however, was tempted by Satan to disobey God's commands and that cause him to permanently fall out of his state of perfection. It is this reason that man has an inherently sinful nature. Scripture states that the only way to escape a fate of eternal bondage to sin is to believe in the redeeming death of Jesus Christ, God's Son. Christ was crucified as a way of atoning for the sins of man and was raised from the dead after three days. Christ then ascended into Heaven where he rules with God. Whoever believes in the redemptive nature of Christ's death and resurrection shall be saved from sin. (Romans 1:16-18)

We believe that Christ will return to earth once again to take his believers to Heaven. The time is not known to man since it is the duty of all believers to live in anticipation of the second coming. We have a duty to spread the redeeming story to everyone on earth. Missions and evangelism also play an important role in this effort.

Our faith tells us that those who believe in Christ will ascend to Heaven at the second coming to reside with the Holy Trinity. Believers that have passed on will likewise be raised from the dead and reborn with perfect new bodies in Heaven. Those who do not believe in Christ will be relegated to a place of endless punishment as recorded in Mark 16:16 and Luke 23:43.

The Church has also adopted the following Covenant as a means by which its believers may express their intent to accept the lordship of Jesus Christ in the membership experience and in the affairs of daily life:

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.

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 and holiness; to give it a place in our affections, prayers and services above every organization of human origin; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrine; to contribute cheerfully and regularly, as God has prospered us towards its expenses, for the support of a faithful and evangelical ministry among us, the relief of the poor and the spread of the Gospel throughout the world. In case of difference of opinion in the Church, we will strive to avoid a contentious spirit, and if we cannot unanimously agree, we will cheerfully recognize the right of the majority to govern.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotion; to study diligently the word of God; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintance; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be kind and just to those in our employ, and faithful in the service we promise others; endeavoring in the purity of heart and good will towards all people to exemplify and commend our holy faith.

We further engage to watch over, to pray for to exhort and stir up each other unto every good word and work; to guard each other's reputation, not needlessly exposing the infirmities of others; to participate in each other's joys, and with tender sympathy bear one another's burdens and sorrows; to cultivate Christian courtesy; to be slow to give or take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, being mindful of the rules of the Savior in the eighteenth Chapter of Matthew, to secure it without delay; and through life, and evil report, and good report, to seek to live to the glory of God, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

When we remove from this place, we will engage as soon as possible to unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **Membership**

#### **SECTION 1 - A D M I S S I O N   O F   M E M B E R S**

Persons may be received into membership by the recommendation of the Board of Deacons and the vote of the Church by any one of the following methods:

**BY BAPTISM** - Any person who confesses Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and who is in agreement with doctrine and practice of this church may be received into the fellowship of the congregation following their baptism by immersion.

**BY LETTER** - A person who has been baptized by immersion and who is in accord with the doctrine and practice of this church may be received by letter of recommendation from another Protestant Christian church.

**BY EXPERIENCE** - A believer who has been baptized by immersion and is a former member of a Christian church, and who is in accord with the faith and practice of St. Paul's Baptist Church, may be received upon statement of their experience.

**BY REINSTATEMENT** – Members who have been excluded from the fellowship may be received back into the fold when the causes which led to the withdrawal are reconciled and the person requests reinstatement through the Deacon Board. If the Church is satisfied with the Deacon's recommendation, it will vote its reception.

**BY WATCH CARE** – Any person who holds membership in another church and desires to keep this relationship may become a watch care associate of this entity for a period of one year. This status will be reviewed annually by the assigned Deacon. A watch care associate has all the rights of membership except he/she cannot be an elected officer of this entity, vote upon changes in the constitution, call or dismiss a Pastor, nor participate in the purchase, sale, or mortgage of church property.

## **SECTION 2 - D U T I E S O F M E M B E R S**

1. The duties of members of St. Paul's Baptist Church are expressed in its Covenant.
2. Any member whose status is changed by marriage, military service, or by residence, shall be under obligation to notify the Church either in writing or verbal communication.

## **SECTION 3 - A C T I V E M E M B E R S**

1. A person who has come into the Church by baptism, by letter, by reinstatement, or by a statement of Christian experience, and who accepts his/her Christian obligations as prescribed in the Covenant shall be considered an active member of the Church.
2. Members are encouraged to tithe. The tithes and offerings are for the maintenance and building of God's Kingdom here on earth. Each member is asked to tithe and offer liberally as the Lord has prospered him/her.
3. Only active members will be eligible to hold office, chair committees, or serve fully (in any official capacity) in the programs of the Church.

## **SECTION 4 - I N A C T I V E M E M B E R S**

Any member who fails to support the Church by his/her attendance, tithe, offerings, or spiritual gifts for a period of one year shall be called to the attention of the Deacon Board. If this occurs, the Deacon Board will work to resolve the inactive status for a period of one year. If resolved, the member will be sent a letter stating he or she is back in good standing and again afforded all privileges of full membership. If not resolved, see **SECTION 5 "RELINQUISHING OF MEMBERSHIP"**

## **SECTION 5 - RELINQUISHING OF MEMBERSHIP**

Persons may be removed from membership rolls by any of the following methods:

**CONFIRMED DEATH** – After receiving notice through obituary, letter or other similar formal communication, relinquishment from membership will be granted.

**BY LETTER** - Any member may request and receive a letter from the Church for the purpose of uniting with another branch of Zion.

**BY SUSPENSION OR REMOVAL** - The Board of Deacons shall annually prepare a list of members who, for a period of one (1) year, have failed to participate in the public worship, the educational programs, or the financial support of the Church without valid reason. Within thirty (30) days, such person shall be contacted by the Board of Deacons. If the Deacons are convinced that such person cannot be reclaimed, he or she shall be notified in writing regarding the recommendation and given thirty (30) days to respond. After said time, a recommendation will be made to the Church that their names be removed from the membership roll. If this action is approved, the person will no longer have membership status.

**OTHER** – If circumstances dictate the necessity for disciplinary action, the matter shall be referred to the Pastor and Board of Deacons for investigation. Once reviewed, the matter may be escalated to the membership at a regular or properly called meeting. The guidelines and principles for the procedure shall be consistent with the teaching in the New Testament and specifically Matthew 18:15-17. Any member who is the subject of a disciplinary proceeding shall be notified in writing (at least thirty (30) days prior) when the date the matter is to be presented to the Church and Board of Deacons. The notice shall contain the nature of the matter and advise the member of their right to appear and be heard in full before the Board of Deacons and the Church.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **The Pastor and Officers**

#### **SECTION 1 – SENIOR PASTOR**

The Senior Pastor shall be the leader of the Church in all activities and, in addition shall:

- Preach the gospel
- Administer the ordinances
- Administer the services of public worship
- Direct the spiritual, physical, and social welfare of the entity
- Be the ex-officio member of all boards, committees, and ministries
- Oversee the pulpit ministry and assign associate clergy to specific duties
- Supervise all volunteers and select staff in conjunction with the Trustee Board
- Preside and moderate all business and called meetings or designate the Chairman of Deacons to preside

The Senior Pastor shall also recommend for service, and supervise, the Associate Ministers. An Associate Minister is not an elected official, but one who has responded to a call to the gospel ministry and possesses either a license to preach or ordination credentials. Both a license to preach and ordination credentials are given to one who has been called to the gospel ministry by way of the Pastor's recommendation to the Deacons. Upon approval of the Pastor and Deacons the recommendation must be approved by the church body. Associate Ministers are to adhere to the same standards as the Pastor and Deacons as described in 1 Timothy 3:1-13.

The primary function of an Associate Minister:

- Assist the pastor in carrying out his/her duties.
- May have the responsibility of leading worship, preaching, teaching bible-study, performing outreach and discipleship, visiting and caring for church members while they are in the hospital and providing follow-up care for those who are grieving, and other responsibilities, all under the discretion of the Pastor.
- Only ordained ministers are permitted to administer the ordinances of the church.
- Are invited to attend Unified Council meetings to provide any necessary support to Ministry Leaders.

He or she shall also be elected by the membership upon the recommendation by the Pulpit Committee as provided in Article VIII, Section 1.

## **SECTION 2 – CHURCH CLERK**

The Clerk shall be elected at the first church meeting of the calendar year and installed on the ceremonial Sunday in February. In addition, the Clerk shall:

- Keep a complete record of all transactions communicated at the business meeting
- Review and have approval of those recordings at the next business meeting
- Keep the record of the names and addresses of all members (should also include the dates and manner of admission or dismissal)
- Keep a list of those individuals who were suspended or relinquished their membership
- Keep the record of baptisms
- Keep the records of the deceased and prepare resolutions
- Notify all officers, committee members, and delegates of their election and appointment
- Issue letters of recommendation and dismissal as voted by the Church
- Preserve and keep on file (in the church office) all communications, minutes, and written reports
- Provide legal notice of all meetings when required by the constitution

An Assistant Clerk may be elected at the first church meeting of the calendar year and will work under the guidance of the Clerk. The individual will replace the Clerk when he or she is absent.



### **SECTION 3 - B O A R D O F D E A C O N S**

There shall be a Board that maintains a ratio of one Deacon per ten households of the congregation. Candidates for Deacons may be recommended by the members of the congregation, the Deacon Board, or the Pastor. Candidates for Deaconship will be elected at the first church meeting of the calendar year and installed on the ceremonial Sunday in February. In the event that the ratio of one per ten households is not being maintained, it will be the responsibility of the Deacon Board to select new candidates and notify the church membership. Nonordained candidates for consideration must be a member of the Church for at least one year. An ordained Deacon from another Baptist church must be a member for at least six months in order to be considered. Once selected and ordained (if not already) the Deacon will retain his or her title for life.

No person may remain in the office of Chairman longer than six (6) consecutive years. The Chairman may be re-elected once their immediate term has ended and six years has elapsed. The Church shall annually elect a Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, and shall meet regularly each month. Special meetings regarding church issues may be called by the Chairman or the Secretary. A majority attendance at these meetings shall constitute a quorum.

#### **Duties**

The Deacon Board shall assume the duties of the Pastor in his or her absence.

The duties of the Deacons shall include;

- Assisting the Pastor in providing the spiritual ministry of the church and with administering church ordinances.
- Assisting the Pastor in his work to consider applicants for church membership
- Assisting the Pastor to respond to request for letters of dismissal
- Assisting the Pastor to provide the pulpit supply
- Assisting the Pastor to provide the leaders of the prayer meetings in his absence
- Assisting the Pastor to visit and care for the sick, needy, and distressed members of the Church

The Deacon Board shall also:

- Make a written report at each meeting on the matters in its charge
- Promote Christian instruction and ministry to the membership
- Provide for the Lord's Supper and its administration

The selection of the Deacons and the governing of their behavior should be guided by the teaching in First (1<sup>st</sup>) Timothy.

## **SECTION 4. - BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

There may be a Board of at least twelve and not more than twenty Trustees that shall be elected at each annual meeting for a term of four (4) years and installed on the ceremonial Sunday service in February. No person may remain in office of Trustee longer than eight (8) consecutive years. The Trustee may be re-elected after a year has elapsed following the expiration of their period of service.

### **Duties**

The Board of Trustees shall:

- Hold in trust all property belonging to the Church and shall take all necessary measures for its protection, management, and upkeep
- Make no major financial changes without the approval of the Joint Board and if necessary, the membership.
- Determine the use and suitable charges of the church building, education center, and fellowship hall by outside groups
- Designate the financial institution where the funds of the Church shall be deposited.
- Make no disbursement greater than 1% of the annual budget without approval of the Joint Board or if necessary, the membership\*\*
- Secure and supervise the service of a caretaker for the property at a salary that is authorized by the Church
- Transact all legal matters on behalf of the Church
- Supervise and disburse funds for the support of the Church as deemed appropriate
- Make written reports to the membership at business meetings and other times as deemed necessary

In a time sensitive catastrophic event, the Board is to seek approval from the chairpersons and vice chairpersons of the Deacon and Trustee Boards as well as the Senior Pastor prior to disbursements. Following disbursement, a communication to the full church body should be made in a timely manner.

The Board shall annually recommend a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary, and shall meet regularly each month. Special meetings may be called by the Chairman or the Secretary, who shall notify the other members. A majority shall constitute a quorum, which will be required for the transaction of business and legal matters.

The Trustees shall be bonded.

## **SECTION 5 - JOINT BOARD**

The Joint Board shall be the Board of Deacons, the Board of Trustees and the Church Treasurer. The Pastor shall be the moderator. The Joint Board shall meet as a deliberate

body to consider such business as it is empowered to consider and shall recommend courses of action for the Church.

The Joint Board shall meet on a quarterly schedule that shall be published and announced at the beginning of each calendar year. It may, however, schedule additional meetings as required. The Joint Board shall not consider or transact any official business unless the required quorum of 1/3 is present.

The Joint Board shall establish and appoint sub-committees to work under its supervision or according to its specific instructions. All such committees will report back to the Joint Board.

The Secretary of each Board shall keep accurate records of its proceedings.

The Joint Board shall review all items on the agenda of a general or call business meeting of the Church.

## **SECTION 6 - UNIFIED COUNCIL**

There shall be a Unified Council which is chaired by the Pastor or Board of Deacons Chairperson (in the absence of the Pastor). The Unified Council will consist of the Pastor, Deacons, Trustees, Treasurer, Departmental Chairpersons, Church Clerk, Associate Ministers and Church School Superintendent. All department matters of importance should be considered by it and then, if necessary, presented to the Joint Board and Church for voting. It shall appoint, subject to ratification by the Church, all standing committees. It shall seek to coordinate the departmental activities of the Church. It shall be instrumental in developing a program for the Church. Meetings shall be held on a regular basis.

## **SECTION 7 CHURCH TREASURER**

The Treasurer shall be a member of the Church for a minimum of one year. That person shall be elected at an Annual Meeting to serve for four (4) years and installed on the ceremonial Sunday service in February.

### Duties

The Treasurer shall:

- Be responsible and have custody of the funds of the Church.
- Authorize and draw on checks only in the name of St. Paul's Baptist Church
- Make certain funds that are raised by or contributed to the Church are separated and placed into accounts as designated for their purpose
- Make no disbursement of funds except for the purpose(s) that they were designated
- Have custody of all securities, investments, title papers, and other valuable financial documents and they shall be kept in secure church files or a safe deposit box at the chosen financial institution

The Treasurer shall present an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements, showing the actual financial condition of the Church at each annual meeting. The report is to have been previously audited by the Finance Committee. The Treasurer shall make quarterly financial reports and other statements as may be desired by the Church.

Upon termination of the office, all updated books and audited reports pertaining to his/her office shall be transferred to the successor.

The Church Treasurer shall be bonded.

The Joint Board or the membership may determine by vote that funds should have a different use than designated.

### **SECTION 8 - BENEVOLENCE TREASURER**

The Benevolence Treasurer shall be elected by the Board of Deacons. He or she will be a member of the Board of Deacons and shall annually pay out, for benevolent purposes, an amount not to exceed the benevolence funds received during the church's fiscal year. Other benevolence funds shall be applied by him or her in accordance with the Church budget and the special purposes for which the same were contributed.

The Benevolence Treasurer shall annually present to the Church an itemized report of receipts and disbursements, showing the actual financial condition of the benevolence account. At each annual meeting this report is to have been previously audited.

He or she shall deliver immediately to his successor all updated books and records pertaining to his office.

The Benevolence Treasurer shall be bonded.

### **SECTION 9 - SUPERINTENDENT OF THE CHURCH SCHOOL**

At the annual church meeting membership shall elect the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent. They shall serve for a minimum of two, but not to exceed, a three-year term. The Superintendent is the executive head of the Church School and has all authority to direct that group.

The Superintendent should direct this group in the way of the faith as predetermined by the Holy Bible and the doctrine of the Baptist Church. In the absence of the Superintendent, the Assistant will assume his or her duties and responsibilities.

## **SECTION 10 - PARLIAMENTARIAN**

The Parliamentarian shall be annually elected. He or she shall be thoroughly familiar with Robert's Rules of Parliamentary Procedures and the Rules of Order as detailed in the Hiscox Guide for Baptist Churches.

The Parliamentarian will be responsible for maintenance and adherence to the Church constitution.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Departments and Standing Committees**

The Church will operate under a departmental structure, with each department having a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. The Unified Council will have oversight responsibility for the departments and standing committees.

## **SECTION 1 - FINANCE COMMITTEE**

The Finance Committee shall be comprised of the Church Treasurer, who will serve as Committee Chairman, at least one Trustee and four other members having an understanding, experience, education, or training in financial accounting, budgeting, banking, etc. The Committee members will be asked to serve two (2) years in staggered terms.

### **Duties**

The Finance Committee shall:

- Support strategic financial Church planning
- Support the Church's budgeting process
- Help to ensure the budget effectively manages the Church's financial assets

## **SECTION 2 - DEPARTMENTS**

The St. Paul's Baptist Church shall be organized in a departmental structure to support the spiritual and physical growth. The organization shall consist of ministry groups. Each ministry and committee within the church shall be included within one of the Departments.

Each ministry shall be required to identify a scripture reference and develop a purpose statement that defines the ministry.

The following are representative departments which may be renamed or modified when appropriate.

Department of Pastoral Ministries  
Department of Worship  
Department of Missions and Evangelism  
Department of Educational Ministries  
Department of Specialized Ministries  
Department of Youth  
Department of Finance and Property Development

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **The Pastorate**

## **SECTION 1 - CALLING A PASTOR**

When the Pastorate is vacant, the Board of Deacons shall recommend a representative Pulpit Committee not to exceed eleven (11) members of the Church. The Pulpit Committee shall take the necessary steps to secure the names of prospective candidates. They shall conduct an investigation and a full background check to confirm the record and qualification of those candidates submitted for consideration. The Church shall not call a minister until such information has been secured. When a suitable person is found, the Pulpit Committee shall recommend the candidate to the membership for further review.

The call of Pastor shall be considered by membership at a regularly called meeting. The purpose and notification of such meeting will be performed by the chairperson of the Pulpit Committee. This will be declared from the pulpit for two consecutive Sunday services. A quorum equivalent to two thirds of the average annual weekly attendance must be present in order to vote on the recommendation of the pulpit committee. Those present at the called meeting must be at least 18 years of age and eligible to vote. The candidates must receive at least three-fourth of the eligible votes via secret ballot. Only one (1) candidate can be presented at a time. The candidate must be ordained prior to becoming Pastor of the Church.

If the Pulpit Committee's recommendation fails to receive the necessary three-fourths vote, the moderator shall declare the individual "rejected" and refer the matter back to re-vet candidates.

If candidate receives the necessary three-fourths vote, the moderator will declare the individual "accepted" and elected. The chairman of the committee shall notify the candidate of the call by letter.

Regardless of the voting outcome, the meeting shall be adjourned without debate.

## **SECTION 2 - TERMINATION OF PASTORATE**

The term of office may be ended upon ninety (90) days notice or less depending upon mutual agreement between the Pastor and the Church.

In the event of immorality, indiscretion, doctrinal error, unethical behavior or disloyalty to the covenant as stated in Matthew 18: 15-18, or a violation of any written agreement between the Pastor and Church, the Pastor is subject to termination.

Should an accusation against the Pastor arise regarding indiscretion, immorality or doctrinal error, the Deacon Board shall review said accusation according to Matthew 18:15-18. After conferring with the Pastor and allowing him or her to make amends, the Deacon Board will make a recommendation regarding the remedial steps or other necessary actions, being mindful of the scripture as stated in James 5: 19-20 and Galatians 6:1.

If the Pastor does not adhere to the remedial efforts of the Deacon Board, a termination recommendation will be brought to the membership.

Termination of the office shall be voted at a called business meetings. The Chairperson of the Deacon Board will provide the purpose and notify the membership of this meeting on two consecutive Sundays. A termination vote will be determined by a two thirds vote of the average annual weekly attendance. That membership must be 18 years or older.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **Elections**

#### **SECTION 1 - TIME**

The yearly Election of the Church Clerk, Deacons, Trustees, Church Treasurer, Superintendent of the Church School, and the Parliamentarian as Identified in Article VI shall be held during the Annual Meeting of the Church. This will occur in the month of January or a date agreed upon by the Joint Board and Pastor.

Vacancies occurring during the year may be filled for the un-expired term at any business meeting.

#### **SECTION 2 QUALIFICATIONS OF VOTERS**

All matters requiring a vote of the Church membership shall be voted on only by active members that are eighteen (18) years of age or older.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **Meetings**

#### **SECTION 1 - WORSHIP SERVICE**

The traditional worship services and Church School shall be held each Sunday.

The Lord's Supper shall be observed on the first Sunday of each month or at such other times that the Deacons or Pastor may determine.

#### **SECTION 2 - C H U R C H MEETING**

The Church will hold two meetings per year, including the Annual Meeting, which shall be held in the month of February. The election of officers, the receiving of the annual reports and the approval of the budget shall occur during the February Church meeting.

The additional meeting date will be the month of July, or a date agreed upon by the Joint Board and Pastor. The additional meeting will be held for the purpose of the transaction of necessary business and the discussion of issues vital to the life and witness of the Church.

A quorum for the transaction of business at the Church meetings shall be fifty (50) active members, 18 years of age or older.



Special business meetings may be called at any time by the Pastor and or Deacons. Special groups or individual members may request a meeting with the Deacons at a regular scheduled Deacon Board meeting. The purpose and notification of such meeting shall be given one week in advance of its occurrence. During regular worship service, however, the Church may, without notice, act upon the reception of new members.

### **SECTION 3 - PRESIDING OFFICERS**

The Pastor, if present, shall preside at all Church, Joint Board, and Unified Council meetings. In his absence, the chairman of the Board of Deacons, Vice Chairman of the Board of Deacons, Secretary and Treasurer shall preside at the meeting.

## **ARTICLE XI**

### **Amendments**

This document may be amended at a regular or called meeting of the Church by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting. The attendance must be at least a quorum of fifty active members 18 years or older. Prior to the vote, however, written notice of the proposed amendment shall be published at least two (2) weeks before the scheduled meeting. Notice of the proposed amendments will be communicated to the membership via electronic or United States Postal Service delivered mail, weekly bulletin, and from the pulpit.

Amendments to this document are to be reviewed and recommended by the Joint Board before being presented to the membership for a vote of approval.

## **ARTICLE XII**

### **By Laws**

### **SECTION 1 - ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The order of business shall generally be as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Devotional -Exercises
3. Minutes of Previous Meeting
4. Reports
  - a. Pastor
  - b. Officers - report of officers are to follow that as listed in Article VI, Section 7-10.
5. Old Business (Deferred Business)
6. New Business
7. Adjournment

## **SECTION 2 - C H U R C H R E C O R D S**

All reports and minutes by officers and committees shall be kept updated and on permanent file in the Church. The files are not to circulate. Documents that contain matters of a personal or sensitive nature may be designated as confidential by the Pastor, Church officers or ministry leaders. Documents designated as confidential shall not be accessible to anyone unless authorized by the chairperson of the Deacon Board, chairperson of the Trustee Board, and the Pastor.

## **SECTION 3 - RULES OF ORDER PROCEDURE**

Robert's Rules of Parliamentary Procedure and Rules of Order as defined in Hiscox Guide for Baptist Churches shall be used as guides in all matters pertaining to or using parliamentary procedures.