

BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH  
 Elsanor Community  
 22250 U. S. Hwy 90  
 Robertsdale, Alabama 36567

#### **A. MISSION STATEMENT**

We, the Bethel Baptist Church, are a growing fellowship of Believers, united and empowered by the Holy Spirit, committed to glorify God by:

- Participating in worship, prayer, Bible study, and loving fellowship;
- Proclaiming to unbelievers that Jesus Christ is the way to eternal and abundant life;
- Teaching, equipping, and nurturing persons for spiritual growth and service;
- Ministering to individuals and families through local and world missions.

Adopted 8/14/91  
 Clerk Verna Davis  
 Moderator Russell E. Brown

Biblical support:

Acts 1:8; Matthew 28: 19-20;  
 Acts 2:42-47; John 4:7-12;  
 Ephesians 3:16-19; 2 Corinthians 8:5

#### **B. VISION STATEMENT**

We envision Bethel Baptist Church to be a family of believers, made up of people from diverse backgrounds, serving and ministering to people of diverse backgrounds in northeast Robertsdale, Elsanor, and the surrounding communities of Central Baldwin County, Alabama.

In doing so, we seek to provide a spiritual environment that impacts the lives of all we encounter as we strive to honor Jesus Christ. Being centered on biblical principles, we are committed to strengthening individuals and families as we work together to carry the uncompromising message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to those living in today's world.

Adopted 10/20/06  
 Clerk Judy Ikner  
 Moderator Warren Stewart

BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH  
Robertsdale, Alabama 36567

## CONSTITUTION

### Preamble

We declare and establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith, and to govern the body in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual church member and the freedom of action of this body in its relation to other churches.

### I. NAME

This body shall be known as the BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH of Robertsdale, Alabama, located four (4) miles east of Robertsdale, at 22250 U. S. Hwy 90 in the Elsanor Community.

### II. OBJECTIVES

To be a dynamic spiritual organism empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible in our church, community, and throughout the world.

To be a worshiping fellowship, experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing His person, and responding in obedience to His leadership.

To experience an increasingly meaningful fellowship with God and fellow believers.

To help people experience a growing knowledge of God and man.

To be a church that ministers unselfishly to persons in the community and world in Jesus' name.

To be a church whose purpose is to be Christlike in our daily living by emphasizing total commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the Lordship of Christ.

### III. STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Holy Bible is the inspired word of God and is the basis for any statement of faith. The church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of "The Baptist Faith and Message" as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963. We band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind. The ordinances of the church are baptism and the Lord's Supper.

#### IV. RELATIONSHIPS

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches. Insofar as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the Baldwin Baptist Association, and the Alabama Baptist State Convention affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

#### V. CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord 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, as we do now, in the presence of God, 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, 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 relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; 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 tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale of and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

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 Christian 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.

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

Adopted	<u>8/14/91</u>
Clerk	<u>Verna Davis</u>
Moderator	<u>Russell E. Brown</u>

BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH  
Robertsdale, Alabama 36567

**BY LAWS**

**I. MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1. General**

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church.

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be member of this church and the conditions of such membership.

**Section 2. Candidacy**

Any person may offer himself as a candidate for membership in this church. All such candidates shall be presented to the church at any regular church service for membership in any of the following ways:

- (1) By profession of faith and for baptism according to the policies of this church.
- (2) By promise of a letter of recommendation from another Baptist Church.
- (3) By restoration upon a statement of prior conversion experience and baptism by immersion when no letter is obtainable.

Should there be any dissent as to any candidate, such dissent shall be referred to the pastor and the deacons for investigation and the making of a recommendation to the church within thirty (30) days. A three fourths vote of those church members present and voting shall be required to elect such candidates to membership.

**Section 3. New Member Orientation**

New church members will be expected to participate in the church's new member orientation plan. This new members' orientation class shall be conducted by one of the knowledgeable and exemplary church members, preferably one of the deacons.

**Section 4. Voting Rights of Members**

Every member of the church over 12 years of age is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference, provided the member is present.

**Section 5. Termination of Membership**

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

- (1) Death,
- (2) Transfer of letter to another Baptist church,
- (3) By uniting with a church of a different denomination or joining some other religious sect, cult, or group,
- (4) Exclusion by action of this church.

## **Section 6. Discipline**

(1) It shall be the basic purpose of the Bethel Baptist Church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The pastor, other members of the church staff and deacons are available for counsel and guidance. Redemption rather than punishment should be the guideline which governs the attitude of one member toward another.

(2) Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, every reasonable measure will be taken by the pastor and by the deacons to resolve the problem. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance. But, finding that the welfare of the church will best be served by the exclusion of the member, the church may take this action by a two thirds vote of the members present at a meeting called for this purpose; and the church may proceed to declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the church.

(3) Any person whose membership has been terminated for any reason which has made it necessary for the church to exclude him may, upon his request, be restored to membership by a vote of the church upon evidence of his repentance and reformation, at a special-called business meeting by a two-thirds vote of the church members present.

## **II. CHURCH OFFICERS**

All church officers must be members of the church. The officers of this church shall be as follows:

### **Section 1. Pastor**

The pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. The pastor will lead the congregation, the organizations, and the church staff to perform their tasks.

The pastor is leader of pastoral ministries in a church. As such he works with the deacons and church staff to:

- (1) Lead the church in performing its tasks,
- (2) Lead the church to engage in a fellowship of worship, witness, education, ministry, and application,
- (3) Proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers, and
- (4) Care for the church's members and other persons in the community.

A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. His election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's notice has been given.

A pastor selection committee shall be appointed to seek out a suitable pastor, and its recommendations will constitute a nomination. Any member has the privilege of making other nominations according to the policy established by the church. The

committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one name at a time. Election shall be by a secret ballot, with an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present being necessary for a choice. The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or the church's request. He shall preside at meetings of the church with the one exception being at business meetings. The church will elect a moderator to preside and the pastor will serve as the parliamentarian for such meetings. The pastor shall give at least a thirty (30) day notice at the time of resignation before terminating his responsibilities as pastor. The church may also terminate the pastor's services by giving him a thirty (30) day notice or it feels that its best interest may be served, shall substitute thirty (30) days salary and benefits in lieu of the pastor's services.

### **Section 2. Church Staff**

This church shall call or employ such staff members as the church shall need. A job description shall be written when the need for staff members is determined. The appropriate committee shall be elected for the purpose of finding the desired staff member. The committee's responsibility will be completed with the approval by the church. Only one (1) candidate will be considered and/or presented to the church at a time. At least a two (2) weeks notice shall be given by staff members (other than the pastor) upon their resignation.

The secretaries shall likewise be recommended as the church has need. This recommendation will come from the personnel committee and employed by church action. Custodians shall be employed on recommendation of the church building and grounds committee.

### **Section 3. Deacons**

(1) There shall be eight (8) active deacons for the first 300 members or fraction thereof, with an additional one (1) deacon elected and activated for every additional fifty (50) members or major fraction thereof.

(2) The term of an active deacon shall be for three (3) years. After serving a term of three (3) years as an active deacon, a period of one (1) year must elapse before a deacon can be re-elected for an additional three (3) year term. In case of death or removal or incapacity to serve, the church may elect a deacon to fill the unexpired term. There is no obligation to constitute as an active deacon a person who comes to the church from another church where he has served as deacon.

(3) No individual shall be considered for election or ordination to the office of deacon who has not by previous service proved himself faithful to the church covenant and is a commendable example of a Christian at home, in business, and in social contacts.

A deacon is expected by the church to fulfill his duties in regular church attendance; he is expected to be a tither; he is expected to shoulder faithfully any and all responsibilities which might be assigned to him in the course of his service unless providentially hindered.

A deacon must have the support of his wife and family in fulfilling the responsibilities for the office of deacon; he must have a deep commitment to harmoniously undergird the many ministries of the church. He should cooperate with and

support the pastor, staff, and the elected leadership of the church in such a manner as would bring glory to God.

No individual shall be considered for election or ordination as a deacon who has been a Christian for less than two years and who has not been a member of Bethel Baptist Church for at least one year.

It shall be pertinent for the church to promote to the office of “deacon emeritus” any deacon who, after honorable service, by reason of age or infirmities shall no longer be able to render active service.

Any deacon missing three (3) meetings consecutively, shall be visited by a committee composed of deacons appointed by the chairman of the deacons. Unless ample reason is given for absences, the deacons may consider him to be inactive. The church should be so notified of such action.

A deacon by necessity of his non-residence, is forced to become inactive and shall immediately be retired from the deacon body.

(4) In accordance with the meaning of the work and the practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. The task of the deacon is to serve with the pastor and staff in performing pastoral ministry tasks; proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers; care for church members and other persons in the community; lead the church to engage in a fellowship of worship, witness, education, ministry, and application according to the teachings of God’s Word.

#### **Section 4. Moderator**

The moderator shall be elected annually. If at all possible this person shall not be serving as an active deacon. The moderator is to preside at all business meetings. The Chairman of Deacons shall by virtue of his position serve as Vice Moderator. He is to reside at any meetings that the moderator is unable to attend. In the event that neither the moderator or vice moderator is present the church will elect someone to serve for that meeting only. The pastor will serve as the parliamentarian to assist the moderator as needed.

#### **Section 5. Clerk**

A clerk shall be elected annually to serve the church. The duties of the church clerk shall be to keep a record of all proceedings of the regular and special business meetings of the church. The clerk shall maintain a permanent record by subject and date of church approved actions establishing policy.

#### **Section 6. Treasurer**

A treasurer shall be elected annually by the church. He shall be an active tither of his income and he shall keep in exemplary fashion the church covenant.

The treasurer shall supervise the payment of all accounts consistent with the budget of the church, any and all exceptions to be made by the church in conference.

The treasurer shall keep separate accounts of various funds as designated by the church. In no case shall he draw from one fund for payments chargeable to another fund without the approval of the church.

The treasurer shall be the custodian of all money, legal documents, insurance policies, and valuable papers of the church.

The treasurer shall keep his books in a state of readiness so that at any time they may be inspected by the deacon body or any member of the church that may request to do so.

The treasurer shall make a monthly detailed statement to the church of all obligations incurred, purchases made, and of all receipts and disbursements.

The Assistant Treasurer, also duly elected by the church, shall perform all the duties of the treasurer in the event of his absence or inability to do so.

### **Section 7. Trustees**

Four trustees shall be elected by the church. They will hold in trust the church property. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, trade, or transfer any property without a specific vote of the church authorizing each action. It shall be the function of the trustees to affix their signatures to legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property or other legal documents where the signature of trustees are required.

The trustees shall perform all their duties, as above defined subject at all times to the direction and oversight of the church.

## **III. COMMITTEES, MINISTRY TEAMS AND COORDINATING GROUPS**

### **Section 1. General**

The church shall elect such committees, groups and teams as it deems necessary. All committee, group and team members shall be recommended by the nominating committee, and must be members of our church.

### **Section 2. Church Council**

(1) The primary functions of the council shall be to recommend to the congregation suggested objectives and church goals; to review and coordinate program plans recommended by church officers, organizations, and committees; to recommend to the congregation the use of leadership, calendar time, and other resources according to program priorities; and to evaluate program achievements in terms of church goals and objectives.

(2) The council, unless otherwise determined by a two-thirds vote of the church, shall have as regular members the pastor, Minister of Education, Minister of Music, Minister of Youth, Sunday School Director, Women on Mission Director, Men's Ministry Director, Chairman of Deacons, and AWANA Director. Committee chairperson, team leaders and church-elected officers shall serve as the church deems necessary.

(3) All matters agreed upon by the council, calling for action not already authorized, shall be referred to the church for approval or disapproval.

**Section 3. Nominating Committee**

The nominating committee coordinates the staffing of all church leadership positions that are filled by volunteers. The nominating committee recommends person for all volunteer positions to be elected by the church.

**Section 4. Personnel Committee**

The personnel committee assists the church in matters related to employed personnel administration. Its work includes such areas as determining staff needs, employment, salaries, benefits, and personnel services.

**Section 5. Church Building and Grounds Committee**

The church building and grounds committee assists the church in matters related to property administration. Its work includes such areas as maintaining all church properties for ready use, recommending policies regarding use of properties, recommending employment of maintenance and janitorial personnel, and assigning responsibility to appropriate personnel for supervision.

**Section 6. Stewardship and Budget Committee**

The stewardship and budget committee is responsible for the preparation and the promotion of the church budget. It is to guard against any unworthy means of securing funds for church use. It is to audit the church books at least once a year and report the results to the church.

**Section 7. Church Accounting Committee**

The church accounting committee is responsible for counting the monies received through the offerings of the church; for preparing and making the deposits of these monies into the night deposit box at the bank and to make a report to the church treasurer of the deposits.

**Section 8. Committees, Groups and Teams - Detailed Responsibilities**

A more complete detailed list of responsibilities of each of the above, as well as other committees, groups and teams that may be added by the church can be found in the Policy and Procedures Manual.

## **IV. PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONS**

**Section 1. General**

All organizations of the church shall be under church control, all officers being elected by the church and reporting regularly to the church.

**Section 2. Sunday School**

The church shall maintain a Bible/Sunday School on each Lord's Day. It will be under the general supervision of the pastor, but it will be directly managed by a director elected annually by the church.

The Sunday School shall be graded by ages or class grades, and observe promotion of pupils from one group to the other according to their age or class grade. This promotion is to take place at the beginning of each new school year.

**Section 3. Women on Missions**

There shall be a Woman on Missions with such officers and organization as needed. The tasks of the Woman on Missions shall be to teach missions; engage in mission action; support world missions through prayer and giving; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

**Section 4. Brotherhood**

There shall be a Brotherhood organization of the church. This program shall have a director who shall be elected by the church. The tasks are to teach missions; engage in mission action; support world missions through prayer and giving; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

**Section 5. Church Music Program**

There shall be a Church Music Program under the direction of the church worship leader. Such officers and/or organizations shall be included as needed. The music tasks shall be to teach music; train person to lead, sing, and play music; provide music in the church and community; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination as relates to music.

## **V. ORDINANCES**

**Section 1. Baptism**

A person who receives Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith; who professes Him publicly at any worship service; and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord, shall be received for baptism.

- (1) Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
- (2) Baptism shall be administered by the pastor or whomever the church may authorize. The Baptismal Committee shall assist in the preparation for, and observance of, baptism.
- (3) Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service.
- (4) A person professing Christ and failing to be baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by the pastor and/or staff and deacons. If negative interest is ascertained, he shall be deleted from those awaiting baptism.

## **Section 2. The Lord's Supper**

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His second coming.

- (1) The Lord's Supper shall be observed quarterly, preferably the first Sunday of the quarter, or as otherwise scheduled.
- (2) The pastor and deacons shall be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper.
- (3) The Lord's Supper Committee shall be responsible for the physical preparation of the elements.

## **VI. CHURCH MEETINGS**

### **Section 1. Worship Services**

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning, and Wednesday evening for preaching, instruction, evangelism, and for the worship of Almighty God. These meetings will be open for the entire membership of the church and for all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor.

### **Section 2. Special Services**

Revival services and any other church meetings which will be essential in the promotion of the objectives of the church shall be placed on the church calendar.

### **Section 3. Regular Business Meetings**

Regular business meetings shall be held monthly on a designated Sunday evening.

### **Section 4. Special Business Meetings**

A specially-called business meeting may be held to consider special matters of significant nature. A one-week notice of the subject, date, time, and location must be given for the specially-called business meeting unless extreme urgency renders such notice impracticable.

### **Section 5. Quorum**

The quorum consists of those church members who attend the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called.

### **Section 6. Parliamentary Rules**

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church.

## VII. CHURCH FINANCES

### **Section 1. Budget**

The budget and stewardship committee, in consultation, with the church council, shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by items the amount needed and sought for all local and world-wide expenses. Offering envelopes will be provided for members' use.

It is understood that membership in this church involves financial obligation to support the church and its causes with regular, proportionate gifts. Each new member shall be encouraged to subscribe to and support the causes of Christ this church is engaged in by the giving of his resources to do so.

### **Section 2. Accounting Procedures**

All funds for any and all purposes shall pass through the hands of the church treasurer, or financial secretary, and be properly recorded on the books of the church.

A system of accounting that will adequately provide for the handling of all funds shall be the responsibility of the budget and stewardship committee.

### **Section 3. Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of the church shall run concurrently with the calendar year.

## VIII. CHURCH POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

### **Section 1.**

Church policies and procedures shall be described in the Policy and Procedures Manual. The manual shall be kept in the church office and made available to any member of the church. The manual shall be maintained by the church secretary. Changes in policies and procedures may be initiated by any church member or organization.

Addition, revision, or deletion of church policies requires;

- (1) the recommendation of the church officer or organization (including committees) to whose areas of assignment the policy relates,
- (2) discussion by the church council, and
- (3) approval by the church.

Procedures may be added, revised, or deleted by:

- (1) recommendation of the appropriate officer or group,
- (2) approval by the church council, and
- (3) approval of the church if deemed necessary by the church council.

## IX. AMENDMENTS

### **Section 1. Constitution and By-Laws**

This set of constitution and by-laws, when adopted by the church, shall take the place of all other rules or regulations heretofore in effect.

### **Section 2. Amendments**

Changes in this constitution and by-laws may be made at any regular business meeting of the church, provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous meeting, and copies of the proposed amendment be furnished to each member present. Amendments to the constitution and by-laws shall be by two-thirds vote of all members of the church present and voting.

Adopted: 5/20/08  
Clerk: Judy Ikner  
Moderator: Jack Tyson