

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Bosqueville Baptist Church

Updated on June 13, 2011

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 priesthood of the believer, the autonomy of the local church, and the freedom of action of this body in relation to other churches.

I. NAME

This body shall be known as the Bosqueville Baptist Church of Waco, Texas, located at 7465 Rock Creek Road, Waco, Texas.

II. STATEMENT OF MISSION

Bosqueville Baptist Church is a body of believers who believe their mission is to share the love of God in Jesus Christ with all people, beginning with their own community, to develop Christians to Christ-like maturity, to equip them for meaningful ministry, to worship God, and to build supportive relationships.

III. 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 worshipping 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.

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

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

IV. STATEMENT OF BASIC BELIEFS

This church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of *The Baptist Faith and Message* as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963. We voluntarily 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 believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper. (See Article VI of the Bylaws.)

V. CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led as we believe by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and, in 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 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, doctrines, and discipline; 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 private 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; too avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale of and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to use our influence to combat the abuse of drugs and the spread of pornography; and 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.

VI. POLICY AND RELATIONS

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. Persons duly received by the members shall constitute the membership. (See Article I of the Bylaws.)

All internal groups created and empowered by the church shall report to and be accountable only to the church membership, unless otherwise specified by church action.

This church 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 Waco Regional Baptist Association (WRBA), the Baptist General Convention of Texas, the Southern Baptist Convention, and Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

BYLAWS

I. CHURCH 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 the church.

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

Section 2. Candidacy

Any person may offer themselves 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 membership from another Baptist church.
- (3) By a statement of prior conversion experience and believer's baptism by immersion when no letter from a Baptist church is obtainable.

Should there be any dissent as to any candidate, such dissent shall be referred to 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 members of this church are encouraged to participate in the church's new member orientation when available.

Section 4. Rights of Members

(1) Every member of the church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in the business meeting, provided the member is present. There will be no provision for absentee balloting.

(2) As supported by Scripture, every member of the church is eligible for consideration by the membership as candidates for elective offices in the church.

(3) Every member of the church may participate in the ordinances of the church as administered by the church, as noted in section VI of the Bylaws.

Section 5. Termination of Membership

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways: (1) death of the member, (2) dismission to another Baptist church, (3) exclusion by action of this church, (4) erasure upon request or proof of membership in a church of another denomination, or (5) at request of the member.

II. CHURCH OFFICERS

Section 1. Trustees

The Committee on Committees shall nominate candidates to serve as trustees. The church shall elect three or more trustees to serve as legal officers for the church. The trustees shall serve until they decide to vacate the position. They shall hold in trust the church property. Upon

a specific vote of the church authorizing each action, they shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property. When the signatures of trustees are required, they shall sign legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property, or other legal documents related to Church-approved matters.

Section 2. Deacons

The deacon body shall recommend candidates to the church and candidates shall be elected by ballot at regular business meetings of the church. The church will work toward a goal of one deacon elected for assigned service for every twelve to fifteen church families.

In accordance with the meaning of the work and the practice in the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. The qualifications of a deacon are outlined in I Timothy 3:1-13. Their task is to serve with the pastor and staff in performing the pastoral ministry tasks of (1) leading the church in the achievement of its mission and vision, (2) proclaiming the gospel to believers and unbelievers, (3) caring for the church's members and other persons in the community, (4) being peacemakers, and (5) licensing and /or ordination of ministers.

The chairman of deacons shall preside as moderator in business meetings in the absence of the pastor; or in the absence of both the pastor and chairman of the deacons, the vice-chairman of deacons shall call the church to order and preside for the election of an acting moderator.

Section 3. Church Clerk as Clerical Officer

The Committee on Committees shall nominate candidates to serve as church clerk. The church shall elect annually a clerk as its clerical officer. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a suitable record of all official actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a register of names of members, with dates of admission, dismissal, death, or erasure, together with a record of baptisms. The clerk shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church and preserve on file all communications and written official reports. The clerk shall be responsible for preparing the annual letter of the church to the association.

The church may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to a church secretary who will assist the elected clerk. All church records are church property.

Section 4. Church Treasurer as Financial Officer

The Committee on Committees shall nominate candidates to serve as church treasurer. The church shall elect annually a church treasurer as its financial officer. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve and payout upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel, all money or things of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of receipts and disbursements. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the church at each regular business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements of the preceding month.

Upon rendering the annual account at the end of each fiscal year and its acceptance and approval by the church, the records shall be delivered by the treasurer to the church clerk, who shall keep and preserve the account as a part of permanent records of the church.

III. MINISTERIAL AND NON-MINISTERIAL STAFF

Section 1. Pastor

The pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church as described in the statement of mission. The pastor will lead the congregation, its organizations and the church staff.

The pastor is leader of pastoral ministries in the church and works with the deacons and church staff to: (a) lead the church in the achievement of its mission, (b) proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers and (c) care for church members and other persons in the community. The pastor shall preside at meetings of this church, and will serve as moderator in all business meetings in keeping with the rules of order authorized in these bylaws.

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

The Business Council shall recommend that a pastor selection committee be elected by the church in the form of written ballots to seek out a suitable pastor. The pastor selection committee elected by the church shall consist of five adult members and two youth members. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one name at a time. Election shall be by ballot, an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present being necessary. The Business Council shall also determine if an interim pastor is needed and recommend suitable candidates.

The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by the pastor's request or by the request of the church. The pastor may relinquish the office of pastor by giving at least a two-week notice to the church at the time of resignation.

The church may declare the office of pastor to be vacant. Such action shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least a one-week public notice has been given. The meeting may be called upon the recommendation of a majority of the membership of Business Council and the Deacons or by written petition signed by not less than three-fourths of the resident church members. The moderator for this meeting shall be designated by the members present by majority vote, and he/she shall be someone other than the pastor. The vote to declare the office vacant shall be by secret ballot; an affirmative vote of three-fourths of the members present being necessary to declare the office vacant except in instances of gross misconduct by the pastor as determined by the Business Council and the Deacon body.

The church shall compensate the pastor with not less than one-twelfth of his total annual compensation when at least a two-week resignation notice is given by the pastor. The termination shall be immediate. Compensation shall be rendered in not more than thirty days. If occupied, the parsonage shall be vacated by the effective date of resignation or termination, unless other arrangements are approved by the Business Council and the Deacons.

Section 2. Other ministerial staff

Other ministerial staff shall be called as partners in Christ's service and employed as the church determines the need for such offices. A job description shall be written when the need for a staff

member is determined. Those staff members of whom the church requires evidence of a personal call of God to minister shall be recommended to the church by the Business Council and called by church vote.

At least two weeks' notice of resignation shall be given to the church. The church may vote to vacate such positions upon recommendation of the Business Council, such termination being immediate and the compensation conditions being the same as for the pastor, except that the amount shall relate to the individual's compensation.

Non-ministerial staff members shall be employed as the church determines the need for their services. The church Business Council shall have the authority to employ and to terminate services of non-ministerial staff members. Such employment and termination of services shall be with the recommendation of the supervising staff member and, as appropriate, with the consultation of related committees of the church.

IV. CHURCH COMMITTEE AND MINISTRY STRUCTURE

The church shall maintain programs of Bible teaching; church member training, church leader training, new member orientation; mission education, action, and support; and music education, training, and performance. All organizations related to the church programs shall be under church control; all officers of the following organizations shall be church members and shall provide ministry reports regularly to the church, and all program activities shall be subject to church coordination and approval.

1. Committee and Ministry Structure – The appended document contains the current

committee and ministry structure of the church and it lists the deacon body, various councils, committees, and ministry teams that are currently active. The document is intended to be amended as the needs of the church change.

(2) The Sunday School shall be the basic organization for the Bible teaching program. Its tasks shall be to teach the biblical revelation, reach persons for Christ and church membership, perform the functions of the church within its constituency, provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

The Sunday School shall be organized by departments and/or classes, as appropriate for all ages, and shall be conducted under the direction of the Sunday School director and secretary as described in the Committee and Ministry Structure.

V. MINISTRY COUNCIL

The ministry council shall serve the church by leading in planning, coordinating, conducting, and evaluating the ministries and programs of the church and its organizations.

The primary functions of the ministry council shall be to recommend to the church suggested objectives and church goals; to review and coordinate ministry and program plans recommended by church officers, organizations, committees and teams; to recommend to the church the use of leadership, calendar time, and other resources according to program

priorities; and to evaluate achievements in terms of church objectives and goals.

Regular members of the ministry council shall be the pastor, other church staff members, directors of church programs and representatives of each ministry team.

All matters agreed upon by the council which call for action not already approved shall be referred to the church for approval or disapproval.

VI. CHURCH ORDINANCES

Section 1. Baptism

This church shall receive for baptism any person who has received 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.

(1) Baptism shall be by immersion in water.

(2) The pastor, or whomever the church shall authorize, shall administer baptism. The deacons shall assist in the preparation for, and the observance of, baptism.

(3) Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service of the church.

(4) A person who professes Christ and is not baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by the pastor and/or staff or deacons. If negative interest is ascertained on the part of the candidate, he/she shall be deleted from those awaiting baptism.

Section 2. The Lord's Supper

The church shall observe the Lord's Supper every other month unless otherwise scheduled by the church. The pastor and deacons shall administer the Lord's Supper and the worship committee shall be responsible for the physical preparations.

VII. CHURCH MEETINGS

Section 1. Worship Services

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday evening for worship. The pastor and church staff shall plan the worship services. The worship committee shall submit a schedule for regular worship services for church approval.

Section 2. Special Services

Revival services and any other church meetings essential to the advancement of the church's objectives shall be scheduled on the church calendar by the pastor and worship

committee.

Section 3. Regular Business Meetings

The church shall hold regular business meetings monthly.

Section 4. Special Business Meetings

The church may conduct called business meetings to consider matters of special nature and significance. A one-week notice must be given for the specially called business meeting unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical. The notice shall include the subject, the date, and time and place of the meeting.

Section 5. Quorum

The quorum consists of those 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.

VIII. CHURCH FINANCES

Section 1. Budget

The Business Council, in consultation with program organization leaders, shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by items the amounts needed and sought for all local and other expenses.

It is understood that membership in this church involves financial obligation to support the church and its causes with regular, proportionate gifts.

Section 2. Accounting Procedures

A system of accounting that will adequately provide for the handling of all funds shall be the responsibility of the Business Council.

All funds received on Sundays for tithes and offerings shall be counted by two church members designated by the Business Council. Any and all funds collected for other purposes shall pass through the hands of the church treasurer, or financial secretary, and be properly recorded on the books of the church, utilizing the procedures set forth in the church's system of accounting.

Section 3. Fiscal Year

The church fiscal year shall run concurrently with the church year which begins on January 1 and ends on December 31.

IX. AMENDMENTS

Changes in the constitution and bylaws may be made at any regular business meeting of the church provided each amendment is presented in writing at a previous business meeting. Copies of the proposed revision or amendment must be furnished to each member present at the earlier meeting. Amendments to the constitution and bylaws shall be by three-fourths vote of church members present.