

CONSTITUTION

1. Preamble

We declare and establish this Constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith as set forth in the teachings of the Holy Scriptures, to govern the body in an orderly manner, and to set forth the corporate commitments of our church membership. 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.

We pledge ourselves to the personal commitments set forth in the Covenant in the belief that the strength and unity of the church are dependent upon the discipline and the level of commitment of each church member.

2. Name

This body shall be known as The Baptist Church of the Covenant, located in Birmingham, Alabama.

3. Objectives

The church shall strive to be a dynamic, spiritual fellowship empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible in our church, community, and throughout the world. Our objectives shall be:

To sustain a worshipping fellowship, experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing God's person, and responding in obedience to God's leadership;

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

To help people experience a growing knowledge of God and humankind;

To be a church that ministers unselfishly to persons in the community and the world in the name of Christ;

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.

4. 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 that are common among Baptist churches. Insofar as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the Birmingham Baptist Association, the Alabama Baptist State Convention, the Southern Baptist Convention, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, Alliance of Baptists, and any other religious bodies deemed appropriate by action of the church.

5. Covenant

5.1 Statement of Faith

The Baptist Church of the Covenant subscribes to the historical Baptist understanding of the Bible as an inspired and authoritative revelation of God, centered and fulfilled in Jesus Christ our Lord.

On the basis of prayerful searching of the New Testament revelation, we earnestly seek the mind of Christ. Acknowledging His "unsearchable riches" and the limits of human capacity, we believe the following to be consistent with His mind and spirit:

God, the Father, disclosed by Jesus Christ, is the supreme reality of the universe, worthy of our highest adoration, devotion, reverence, and worship.

Jesus, the Christ, makes ultimate demands upon His disciples, asking for total commitment as a requirement for life fulfillment and effective ministry.

The Church, the people of God, is the body of Christ and the fellowship of the Spirit in whom the divine life and presence acts creatively and dynamically. The Spirit brings to completion the redeeming, reconciling,

healing work of Christ through inspiring worship, prophetic proclamation, continuing education, and sacrificial ministry.

The Christian life, under the lordship of Christ, is expressed in continuing repentance and in glad obedience to His commands. He calls us to disciplined living according to His example and teachings, requiring self-giving love without discrimination, creative involvement in meeting human needs, joyful response in personal and family devotions, and faithful stewardship of all life's resources.

5.2 Corporate Commitments

We commit ourselves to:

A membership that is open to all persons who accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and who desire to pattern their lives after the teachings of Christ.

A caring fellowship that seeks to incarnate the love of Christ in individual lives, expressed in warmth and concern for the spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being of one another as we minister in harmonious Christian love.

A prophetic proclamation of the Christian faith that is responsible and free, fervently evangelical, socially concerned, and relevant to our needs as a caring fellowship in today's society.

A ministry to our community that expresses our commitment to a risen Lord in a free, creative, and flexible manner.

A program of Christian education that is advanced, innovative, and based on sound biblical interpretation.

5.3 Personal Commitments

I commit myself to:

Seek a deepening relationship with Christ through daily Bible study, private devotion, and personal prayer.

Live in a way that demonstrates my personal response to the Christian ethic in the family, in the church, and in the total community.

Worship regularly with this congregation, regarding each opportunity for corporate worship as a high priority occasion in my life.

Prepare myself for the fulfillment of my commitment through participation in the educational activities of the church.

Engage in active ministry in my occupation, in my daily contacts, and in the ministries of the church to the community.

Give sacrificially of my money as one tangible expression of a wholehearted self-giving stewardship of all of life, with the tithe as a guide.

Give myself in loving concern for individuals within the church, supporting them in life needs, seeking to be an instrument of redemption and reconciliation, and recognizing the freedom and dignity of personal convictions within the bonds of unity.

BYLAWS

1. Introduction

This body is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church seeking to govern itself 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.

2. Membership

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

2.1 Candidacy for Membership

Membership in the Baptist Church of the Covenant is open to all persons who accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and who desire to pattern their lives after the teachings of Christ. Persons seeking membership shall present themselves during the period of invitation at a regular worship service of the church. They shall be received as candidates for membership by one of three ways: (1) by initial commitment of their lives to Christ as Lord and Savior, (2) by statement of faith, or (3) by transfer of letter from another church. All persons who have not had believer's baptism shall be candidates for baptism.

Names of candidates for membership shall be presented to the church members by means of the church newsletter. Any opposition to the acceptance of a candidate must be clearly stated in private to the Deacons with the reason given for such opposition before the candidate is presented to the church.

The Deacons shall conduct a program of orientation for candidates for membership. The orientation will familiarize the candidates with the meaning of church membership, the Church Covenant, the ministry and educational activities and opportunities of the church, the structure and functions of the committees of the church, and the church budget and its relation to the various activities of the church. For new Christians, a period of education in the basic tenets of the Christian life will be provided. Following the orientation, candidates will be asked to affirm their commitment by accepting the Covenant of the church as found in the Constitution. The Education Committee shall assist the Deacons in preparing the orientation program.

Candidates shall remain under the watchcare of the church until they have been inducted into full membership. They are expected to participate in all the activities of church life, except voting or serving as church officers, and are encouraged to avail themselves of the counsel and fellowship of the members and staff. If at any time during the orientation process the candidate decides that he or she no longer wishes to be considered for membership, that person's name shall be dropped from the list of candidates and the congregation shall be notified.

The Deacons shall determine with the Pastor when the candidates are ready to be inducted. The Deacons shall present candidates to the church for formal induction at a regular worship service.

Persons who wish to maintain membership in another church but wish to be affiliated with the Baptist Church of the Covenant may request to be placed under the watchcare of the church. Persons under the watchcare of the church shall have all the rights and responsibilities of full members except that they may not vote on church business nor may they serve as church officers.

The Deacons shall handle exceptional situations when the normal procedures for induction of members cannot be followed.

2.2 Recommitment of Membership

On the first Sunday in November, each member shall be given an opportunity for recommitment to the life of the church.

2.3 Termination of Membership

Membership in this church may be terminated by death, dismissal to another church, or exclusion by action of this church.

Should some serious condition arise that would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, every reasonable measure will be taken by the ministerial staff and by the Deacons to resolve the problem. But, if the problem cannot be resolved, the church may exclude a member by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a meeting called for this purpose. Any person whose membership has been terminated by exclusion may, upon that person's request, be restored to membership by a two-thirds vote of the members present upon evidence of that person's repentance and reformation.

for more than twelve months, the Deacons may transfer that member to inactive status. A member on inactive status may not vote or hold a church office and will not be assigned a deacon.

2.4 Voting

Every active member of the church present at the time of voting is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference. Decisions shall be by majority vote unless otherwise provided herein.

3. Officers

The officers of the church shall be the Deacons; the members of the Council on Mission (including the Trustees); the Chairs of the Church Communications Committee, the Congregational Life Committee, the Education Committee, the Ministry Committee, the Property Committee, the Staff Committee, and the Worship Committee; the Clerk; the Moderator; and the Treasurer. All officers shall be active members of the church.

3.1 Elections and Appointments

Deacons and members of the Council on Mission (including the Trustees) shall serve terms of three years. All other officers shall serve terms of one year. All terms shall begin the first day of January of each year. Unless otherwise provided herein, officers may be elected to successive terms.

In July of each year, the Clerk shall administer an interest survey to the congregation. The purpose of this survey shall be to give each church member an opportunity to indicate the lay leadership positions in which that member would be willing to serve. The Deacons shall assist in encouraging each member to respond to the survey.

At the July business meeting, the church shall elect an *ad hoc* Nominating Committee of seven individuals. The Nominating Committee shall solicit from among the members of the church nominees for all vacant officer positions for the following year. The Clerk shall supply the Nominating Committee the results of the interest survey to aid in their work. The election to fill these positions shall be held at the October business meeting. The names of the nominees for all positions shall be published in the church newsletter no later than one week before the October business meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at the October business meeting. After the election of officers in October, the responsibilities of the Nominating Committee are ended, and it shall dissolve.

The officers elected in October shall recruit other committee members and fill other roles of responsibility as described in the following sections. These officers shall have the authority to appoint subcommittees and task forces as they shall see fit to carry out their responsibilities. The names of all persons filling these positions shall be published in the church newsletter no later than December 31 of each year.

In the event that a vacancy occurs in any officer position during the year, the Council on Mission shall nominate a candidate to fill the position. The election to fill the position shall occur at the next regular or called business meeting, at which time additional nominations may be made from the floor.

3.2 Team Covenants

The Deacons, Council on Mission, and all standing committees of the church shall adopt a team covenant during January of each year. The purpose of this covenant is to promote communications between members and avoid polarization within the group. These covenants shall be made part of the Policy Manual. Guidance for preparing covenants may be found in the Policy Manual.

3.3 Deacons

In accordance with the meaning of the word and practice of the New Testament, Deacons are to be servants of the church. The duties and qualifications of the Deacons shall be those prescribed by the New Testament (Acts 6:3, I Timothy 3:8-13). They shall assist the ministerial staff by consistently and regularly visiting and counseling with church members, caring for members in times of crisis or distress, initiating personal or group counseling with individuals whose conduct threatens the church, serving the Lord's Supper, keeping the membership enlisted in the full program of the church, promoting a spirit of cooperation among the membership, and performing such other duties as may be delegated to them by the church. The Deacons shall collect and maintain visitor registration information. The Deacons shall contact visitors and determine the desirability of a home visit. The Deacons, with the assistance of the Education Committee, shall provide a program of orientation for candidates for membership as

described in Section 2.1.

The Deacons shall select their own chair, a recording secretary to prepare meeting minutes and reports to the church, and any other officers they shall choose.

There shall be a minimum of one Deacon for every eighteen active church members or individuals under watchcare or major fraction thereof. Deacons shall be chosen from both men and women members of the church. The number of Deacons to be elected each year shall be based on the church enrollment as of the first day of June of the current year less the number of Deacons whose terms do not expire the following December. There is no obligation to constitute as active Deacons persons who come to the church from other churches where they have served as Deacons. Any person elected as Deacon who has not previously been ordained as a Deacon shall be ordained at an appropriate time.

3.4 Council on Mission

The Council on Mission shall advise the church on all matters relating to administration, policy, and planning. It shall advise in the use of leadership, fiscal, and physical resources according to program priorities. It shall assist the church in establishing and periodically updating goals and objectives for the future. It shall develop and periodically update an analysis of long-range church and community needs and evaluate the effectiveness of the church's programs in addressing those needs. It shall review and coordinate program plans recommended by church officers, staff, and committees, and shall evaluate program achievements. It shall receive reports from the other officers and staff relating to the financial affairs and needs of the church, and it shall make such recommendations to the church as it deems necessary. The Council on Mission and the Treasurer shall prepare and recommend an annual Budget of Expenditures as described in Section 8.1.

The Council on Mission shall comprise nine members. The Council shall select its own chair, a recording secretary to prepare meeting minutes and reports to the church, and any other officers they shall choose. Members of the Council on Mission shall hold no other officer positions in the church. Those elected to the Council shall have been a member of the church at least one full year prior to their election and shall have served on at least one standing committee of the church. After serving a three-year term on the Council a member may not serve another term for at least two years. Members will serve three-year staggered terms with three new members being elected each year.

All matters agreed upon by the Council on Mission calling for action not already authorized by the church or by these by-laws shall be referred to the church for approval. If the Council is not unanimous on any such recommendation to the church, the Council is encouraged to present both the majority recommendation and a minority report for full consideration by the church.

Any church member may attend the meetings of the Council on Mission and may bring to its attention any matter affecting the church.

The Council on Mission shall provide a report to the church at each regular quarterly business meeting.

3.4.1 Trustees

Three of the members of the Council on Mission shall serve as Trustees. Trustees shall execute such legal documents as may be required by law and such other documents as they may from time to time be empowered and directed by the church to execute. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without a specific vote of the church authorizing each action.

The Trustees are authorized and empowered to begin and prosecute any suit or action that they deem necessary to enforce or preserve any cause or action, right, or claim possessed by the church and to defend any action or suit brought against the church.

Trustees shall serve three-year staggered terms, with one new Trustee being elected each year.

3.5 Church Communications Committee

The Chair of the Church Communications Committee shall appoint the members of the Church Communications committee. The committee shall publicize the activities of the church and its program and shall promote public relations with other religious bodies and with the general public.

The Chair of the Church Communications Committee shall provide a report to the church at each quarterly business meeting.

3.6 Congregational Life Committee

The Chair of the Congregational Life Committee shall appoint the members of the Congregational Life Committee. The committee shall promote Christian fellowship among the members of the church. It shall provide programs that break down barriers among church members and assimilate new members. It shall schedule and plan for social functions, recreational activities, and celebrations. It shall formulate policies for the kitchen and for the preparation and serving of food.

The Chair of the Congregational Life Committee shall appoint a Historian. The Historian shall be responsible for maintaining historical records of the church.

The Chair of the Congregational Life Committee shall provide a report to the church at each quarterly business meeting.

3.7 Education Committee

The Chair of the Education Committee shall appoint the members of the Education Committee. The committee shall plan and organize the program of biblical and missions education of the church. It shall assist the Deacons in the orientation of new members as described in Section 2.1. It shall provide properly trained teachers and adequate space and materials for education classes and programs. It shall purchase necessary literature, supplies, and equipment and shall be responsible for their storage, distribution, and proper use. It shall also assist church members in discovering and applying their spiritual gifts in the ministry of the church.

The Chair of the Education Committee shall appoint a Librarian. The Librarian shall seek to preserve and enlarge the library and promote the maximum use of its books and facilities.

The Chair of the Education Committee shall provide a report to the church at each quarterly business meeting.

3.8 Ministry Committee

The Chair of the Ministry Committee shall appoint the members of the Ministry Committee. The committee shall assist each member of the church in identifying a ministry in which that person can serve the community. It shall give leadership in the development of the gifts of all members that they may be used to minister to the fullest extent of their abilities in the name of Christ. The committee shall recruit leadership for the ministries of the church. The committee shall provide guidelines for church-sponsored ministry or mission trips and shall provide assistance as requested in the planning of such trips.

The Chair of the Ministry Committee shall provide a report to the church at each quarterly business meeting.

3.9 Property Committee

The Chair of the Property Committee shall appoint the members of the Property Committee. The committee shall assist the church in matters related to properties administration. It shall maintain all church properties for ready use and establish policies regarding the use of those properties. It shall be responsible for preparing the baptistery for baptismal services. It shall be responsible for the care and use of any church-owned vehicles and shall recruit and train drivers to operate those vehicles. It shall advise and assist all groups in the acquisition and display of works of art. It shall make certain that the church properties are adequately and economically insured and that all needed insurance policies are promptly renewed.

The Chair of the Property Committee shall provide a report to the church at each quarterly business meeting.

3.10 Staff Committee

The Chair of the Staff Committee shall appoint the members of the Staff Committee. The committee shall

assist the church in all matters related to employed personnel. It shall oversee the hiring of all church staff except the Pastor. It shall prepare job descriptions for each staff position. It shall develop policies to ensure the equitable and fair treatment of all church staff. It shall be available to all staff members for consultation on personal and professional matters related to their functioning as staff members. It shall be responsible for aiding the church staff in resolving personnel conflicts. It shall conduct annual evaluations of all staff.

The Chair of the Staff Committee shall provide a report to the church at each quarterly business meeting.

3.11 Worship Committee

The Chair of the Worship Committee shall appoint the members of the Worship Committee. The committee shall work with the ministerial staff to plan a yearly worship calendar for all worship services. It may also assist, as required by the ministerial staff, in the planning for any special events (prayer, music, weddings, funerals, etc.). The scope of work for this committee shall not include those duties under the responsibility of the ministerial staff (e.g., detailed planning for specific worship services, or choosing scripture, sermon topics and content or music). It shall provide ushers and receptionists for all services when they are needed. It shall make all necessary preparations for baptismal services and for serving the Lord's Supper. It shall purchase needed supplies for baptisms and the Lord's Supper and be responsible for their storage and care. It shall instruct candidates for baptism in the matter of dress and deportment during the act of baptism. It shall plan and supervise the use of art, including floral arrangements, in the sanctuary for purposes of decoration and for enhancing the spirit of worship. It shall have general responsibility for the purchase and care of musical instruments, hymn books, and music literature.

The Chair of the Worship Committee shall provide a report to the church at each quarterly business meeting.

3.12 Clerk

The Clerk shall be the secretary of the meetings of the church in conference. The Clerk shall keep a fair and intelligible record of all such meetings and record them in a suitable, permanent record book. The Clerk shall keep a register of the names of members, with dates of admission, baptism, dismissal or death. The Clerk shall issue letters of transfer of membership when requested by other churches of like faith and order, unless at the time of the application charges of misconduct unbecoming a Christian are pending. The Clerk shall notify persons excluded from fellowship of such action. The Clerk shall conduct an annual interest survey as described in Section 3.1. The Clerk shall maintain the Policy Manual as described in Section 5. The Clerk shall provide up-to-date copies of the Constitution, By-laws, and Policy Manual to all officers of the church.

All church records are church property and shall be filed in the church office.

The Clerk shall appoint an Assistant Clerk. The Assistant Clerk shall serve in the absence of the Clerk and render the Clerk such assistance as may be necessary in the execution of the Clerk's duties.

The Clerk shall provide a report to the church concerning changes in membership at each quarterly business meeting.

3.13 Moderator

The Moderator shall preside over all church conferences and business meetings where official church business will be transacted. The Moderator shall be knowledgeable of *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised*.

3.14 Treasurer

The Treasurer shall receive all moneys of the church from whatever source derived. The Treasurer shall pay salaries and other obligations authorized by the Budget of Expenditures. Any item not authorized by the Budget of Expenditures must be authorized by the provisions herein elsewhere set forth before financial obligation is incurred. The Treasurer shall not advance or pay out money not already in hand to the credit of the church. The Treasurer shall administer the accounting function and maintain the records necessary to reflect accurately the financial condition of the church. The Treasurer and the Council on Mission shall prepare and recommend an annual Budget of Expenditures as described in Section 8.1.

The Treasurer shall provide a monthly report to the Council on Mission. The Treasurer shall provide to the church at each quarterly business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements for the preceding

quarter. The Treasurer shall make a report for the year at the business meeting following the close of the fiscal year.

The Treasurer shall appoint an Assistant Treasurer. The Assistant Treasurer shall serve in the absence of the Treasurer and shall render the Treasurer such assistance as may be necessary in the execution of his or her duties.

The Treasurer shall appoint an Offering Committee. The Offering Committee shall count all offerings that are made to the church at worship services.

4. Church Staff

The church shall employ a Pastor, other ministerial staff, and support staff as deemed appropriate to enable the church to fulfill its mission. The ministerial staff shall be expected to adopt a team approach to ministry. The ministerial staff shall have primary responsibility for planning and directing services of worship. The congregation shall expect no more of the families of church staff than of any other family in the church. All members of the church staff shall serve at the pleasure of the church.

4.1 Calling of the Pastor

To begin the election of a Pastor, a Pastor's Nominating Committee of seven persons shall be nominated from the floor and elected at a regular or called business meeting of the church. The Pastor's Nominating Committee shall elect from its members a person to chair the committee and a person to serve as secretary. This committee shall proceed with minimum delay to select a minister whose Christian character and qualifications fit that person for the office of Pastor of this church.

At least one week's notice shall be given of the meeting at which the Pastor's Nominating Committee shall submit its report. This report shall include the terms of employment under which the Pastor will serve. At any meeting held for the election of a Pastor, no name shall be considered, nor shall any nominations be made, except that presented by the Pastor's Nominating Committee. The vote shall be on the adoption of the report of the committee. If three-fourths of the members present vote to approve the committee's recommendation, the Moderator shall declare the nominee elected. Should the committee's report fail to receive the necessary three-fourths vote, the Moderator shall declare the nominee not elected and shall refer the matter to the committee for further action. The meeting shall then be adjourned without debate.

The duties of the Pastor's Nominating Committee shall terminate when it has made adequate provision for housing for the Pastor and the Pastor has arrived to assume his or her duties.

4.2. Selection of Other Church Staff

Employment and termination of church staff members, other than the Pastor, shall be recommended to the church by the Staff Committee with the approval of the Pastor and must be approved by the church in conference by a three-fourths majority of the members present and voting.

5. Policy Manual

The Clerk shall maintain a Policy Manual. The Policy Manual shall contain policies developed by officers, committees, and staff to aid them in carrying out their responsibilities. All policies shall include the officer, committee, or staff member responsible for carrying out the policy and the date on which the policy became effective. To aid church officers and staff, the Clerk shall maintain as part of the Policy Manual a schedule of deadlines set by the By-Laws or by policies. All policies shall be presented to the church for approval at a regular or called business meeting.

6. Ordinances

The church recognizes two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper.

6.1 Baptism

A person who receives Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith, who professes Him publicly at any worship service, who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord, who is recommended to this church for membership by the Deacons, and who has not previously been baptized shall be received for baptism. Baptism shall be by

immersion in water and shall be administered by the Pastor or whomever the church shall authorize. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service.

6.2 The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby believers, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His Second Coming. The Pastor, the Deacons, and any other persons selected by the Pastor shall serve the Lord's Supper.

7. Church Meetings

7.1 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 all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the ministerial staff. Special services and other church meetings that will be helpful in church programs and in the promotion of the objectives of the church may also be placed on the church calendar. No meetings of any organizations, committees, or groups shall be held on the church property during the progress of any church services. This shall not apply to the nursery or the properly scheduled classes for children.

7.2 Business Meetings

Regular business meetings shall be held at least quarterly on the Wednesday night following the third Sunday of the month. The Chair of the Council on Mission shall preside at business meetings in the absence of the Moderator. In the absence of both Moderator and Chair of the Council on Mission, the Chair of the Deacons shall serve as Moderator. A specially called business meeting may be held to consider special matters of significant nature. A one-week notice of the subject, date, and time must be given for any specially called business meeting unless extreme urgency renders such notice impracticable. The quorum consists of those who attend the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called. *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised*, is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church.

8. Church Finances

8.1 Budget

The Council on Mission and the Treasurer shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive Budget of Expenditures, indicating by item the amounts needed for all expenses. The Budget of Expenditures shall be submitted to the church at the October business meeting. At a designated service each member will be given opportunity to make a pledge, thereby subscribing the Budget of Expenditures.

8.2 Receipts

The Offering Committee shall count all offerings that are made to the church at worship services. It shall accurately and correctly allocate all such offerings to the accounts for which they are designated and shall properly endorse for deposit all checks, drafts, and money orders. All offerings not designated shall be allocated to the general fund. This committee shall prepare and make deposits of the offerings handled by it and shall make a written report of such deposits to the Treasurer.

No entertainment for which an admission fee is charged shall be allowed in the church building. Neither the church nor any organization thereof shall conduct any sale, raffle, or entertainment for the purpose of raising money, nor shall special collections other than for the purpose of the church be taken without the consent of the Council on Mission.

8.3 Purchases and Payments

All budgeted purchases made by the church shall be on requisition forms with proper endorsement by a staff member or other authorized person. When practical, all purchases in excess of \$500 shall be made from the lowest acceptable bidder among at least three bidders. All payments shall be made by check bearing authorized signatures. Invoices for all purchases shall be retained by the Financial Secretary.

All checks shall be signed by two individuals. The church, upon the recommendation of the Council on
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Mission, shall designate those who shall have authority to sign or countersign checks on all funds and accounts of the church. In emergencies the Council on Mission is authorized to make unbudgeted expenditures not exceeding \$500. With the concurrence of the Deacons, the Council on Mission may make emergency unbudgeted expenditures up to \$1,000. All such expenditures in excess of \$1,000 shall be authorized by the church.

8.4 Accounting Procedures

All funds for any and all purposes shall pass through the hands of the Treasurer or Financial Secretary and be properly recorded on the books of the church. The Treasurer and the Financial Secretary shall be bonded. A system of accounting that will adequately provide for the handling of funds shall be the responsibility of the Council on Mission. The financial records of the church will be examined each year by an independent auditor. Designated gifts made through the church must be for use by the church in one or more of its activities or for a purpose approved by the church. All designated funds shall be disbursed in strict accordance with the designation.

8.5 Fiscal Year

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

9. Amendments

Changes in this Constitution and Bylaws may be made by presenting such changes in writing at a regular or called business meeting. The changes shall then be voted on at a subsequent business meeting. Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws shall be by two-thirds vote of all members of the church present.

Adopted by the church at a called business meeting on November 3, 1976.

Last Amendment made on November 30, 2005.