

“TO KNOW CHRIST AND TO MAKE HIM KNOWN”

Constitution and Bylaws

Southside Baptist Church of Suffolk



CONSTITUTION OF SOUTHSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH OF SUFFOLK

ARTICLE I: PREAMBLE

We, the members of Southside Baptist Church of Suffolk hereby establish this Constitution in order to preserve and secure the principles of our Faith; to ensure governance of this Body in a biblical and orderly manner; to preserve the liberties of each member; and to ensure freedom of independent action of this Church in its relationship to other religious bodies and organizations. In establishing this Constitution, we recognize the Holy Bible as our ultimate Authority, understanding that no other document shall replace or supersede the teaching of Scriptures.

ARTICLE II: NAME

This body shall be organized as a church corporation known as Southside Baptist Church of Suffolk (hereinafter “Southside Baptist Church” or “the Church”) located at 917 Carolina Road, Suffolk, Virginia 23434.

ARTICLE III: PURPOSE – Vision and Mission

We, the Body of Christ at Southside Baptist Church, are a local New Testament Church. As a “called out” group of believers, we have been separated by God for a purpose to fulfill the Vision He has given to us. This Vision, “To Know Christ and To Make Him Known”, reminds us of the reason we exist and what we hope to see through each ministry in the Church.

Our Mission is to fulfill the Vision God has given to us. To help us daily walk and function in light of our Vision, we have created a Mission Statement that drives all that we do. Our Mission is simple, “Reaching to Teach, Teaching for Change and Changing to be Like Christ”. This Mission drives our priorities.

We believe in the importance of teaching the Word of God to grow mature followers of Jesus Christ who are equipped for the work of the ministry. This objective is accomplished by systematically teaching the Word of God through the worship services, small group gatherings on Sunday morning and one-on-one discipleship of believers. It is our goal to help believers grow to To Know Christ.

We also believe in the great need for the Gospel to go into “all the world”. We acknowledge this responsibility, as ambassadors of the Lord Jesus Christ, to take the message of salvation to every Nation, Tribe and Tongue. As the Gospel goes out, it is our hearts prayer and desire that when a person repents of their sin and confesses faith in Christ, that they would follow the Lord in believer’s baptism and then be disciplined in the Word of God. As ambassadors of Jesus Christ we want To Make Him Known.

ARTICLE IV: STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. The Holy Scriptures – We believe in the word-by-word inspiration and divine authority of the Holy Scriptures
 - a. We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the verbally and plenary inspired Word of God. The Scriptures are inerrant, infallible and God-breathed, and therefore, are the final authority for faith and life. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament are the complete and divine revelation of God to Man. No other writings, experiences or traditions, of any kind, are inspired in this sense. The Scriptures shall be interpreted according to their normal grammatical-historical meaning. Where symbols and figures of speech are used, they are to be interpreted in a manner consistent with their use through the Bible as made obvious from the text in which they are contained. (II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:20-21).
2. The Godhead – We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
 - a. We believe in one Triune, creator God, existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Eternal in being, identical in essence, equal in power and glory, and having the same divine attributes and perfections, yet exercising them in varied offices. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; John 14:7-12; John 16:7; II Corinthians 13:14.)
3. The Person and Work of Jesus Christ – We believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as true God and true Man; His virgin birth, sinless humanity, substitutionary death, bodily resurrection, present advocacy, and His personal, imminent, bodily, visible, Pre-Tribulational, and Premillennial return for His Church.
 - a. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin-Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man through God's grace. (Matthew 1:18-20; John 1:1, 2, 14, 18; Luke 1:35)
 - b. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for the sins of the whole world as a substitutionary sacrifice, and that His shed blood justifies all who believe on Him. (Romans 3:24-26; 4:25; I Corinthians 15:3-4; II Corinthians 5:21, John 1:29, John 3:16, I John 2:1-2)
 - c. We believe in the resurrection of the crucified Body of our Lord Jesus Christ and that our redemption and salvation is guaranteed to us by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead, in His bodily ascension into heaven, and in His present life there for us as High Priest and Intercessor. (Matthew 28:5-6; I Corinthians 15:12-19; Acts 1:9; Hebrews 4:14-16; 7:23-25; 9:24; I John 2:1-2)
 - d. We believe in "that blessed hope", which is the personal, visible, Pre-Tribulational, Premillennial and imminent return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. (I Corinthians 15:51-53; I Thessalonians 4:14-17; Titus 2:13; I John 3:2-3)
 - e. We believe in the rapture, the personal Pre-Tribulational, imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His bride, the church, and in His subsequent personal Premillennial return, visibly to the earth, to establish His Kingdom and to reign for a thousand years over the entire earth from the throne of David. (Zechariah 14:4-11; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; I Corinthians 15:51-52; Revelation 19:11-16; 20:6)
 - f. We believe that after the 1,000 year reign of Jesus Christ that there will then be the final judgement, known as the Great White Throne Judgment. The "dead, small and great" will face the judgment of God because they rejected Jesus Christ. Following this judgment, we will see a New Heaven and New Earth. Revelation 20 and 21.

4. The Personality of satan:
 - a. We believe that satan is a fallen angel, the author of sin and instrumental in the Fall of Man; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and, that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire. (Job 1:6-7; Isaiah 14:12-17; Matthew 4:2-11; 25:41; Revelation 20:10)
5. The Total Depravity of Man – We believe in the fall of man, resulting in his complete and universal separation from God and his need of salvation.
 - a. We believe man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the race fell and thereby incurred not only physical death, but also spiritual death, which is separation from God; and that all mankind have inherited a sinful nature, became willful sinners and with the expression of personal choice, are totally unable to regain their former position, and are without excuse before Almighty God. We do not believe that Total Depravity means Total Inability. Salvation is available to all those who repent and believe by faith through grace. (Genesis 1:26; 3:1-24; Romans 1:20; 3:23; 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-6, 12, Ephesians 2:8-9)
 - b. While we believe in the Total Depravity of Man in that he can do nothing in and of himself to warrant acceptance by God, we do not believe that Total Depravity means Total Inability. Man is able to respond to the work of the Spirit of God to convict and draw him to repentance and faith.
6. Salvation, New Birth, Eternal Security, Eternal State – We believe that salvation is a free and everlasting gift of God, entirely apart from works; that every person is responsible to receive salvation by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that a soul once saved can never be lost. (Deuteronomy 31:6; Hebrews 13:5)
 - a. We believe salvation is a gift of God given to the hopelessly lost sinner by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of sins. Salvation is solely through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and being a gift, cannot be earned by any measure of good works. All who understand and believe that Christ died for them as their sacrifice are born again and become the Sons of God. (Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-9; John 1:12; 3:5-7)
 - b. We believe the Scriptures teach the new birth. At the time of the new birth, the Holy Spirit imparts the new nature and spiritual life. We believe one who is born again becomes a new creation in Jesus Christ and salvation is impossible without the new birth. (John 3:3-6; II Corinthians 5:17; Titus 3: 5-7; I Peter 1:23)
 - c. We believe the salvation of every believer is secure for all eternity from the moment of new birth. This security is guaranteed to each believer by the fact that the life received is eternal life, by the keeping power of God, by the sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit, and by the interceding ministry of Christ. We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word. (John 10:27-30; Romans 8:1, 29-30; Romans 13:13-14; Galatians 5:13; Ephesians 4:30; Titus 2:11-15; Hebrews 7:25)
 - d. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment. (Matthew 25:46; John 5:28-29; 11:25-26; Revelation 20:5-6, 12-13)

- e. We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection, when spirit, soul, and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord. (Luke 23:43; II Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 3:21; I Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelation 20:4-6)
 - f. We believe that after death the souls of unbelievers remain in constant punishment and torment until they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment. (Matthew 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; II Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Revelation 20:11-15)
7. The Nature and Work of the Holy Spirit – We believe that the Holy Spirit regenerates with divine life and personally indwells the believer upon his faith in Christ for salvation.
- a. We believe that the Holy Spirit is God, equal with the Father and the Son and of the same substance and nature; that He convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment; bears witness to the truth; is the agent of the new birth; and that He seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses to, sanctifies, and enables the believer. We believe that He baptizes believers into the Church, the Body of Christ, and He indwells them permanently, seals them unto the day of redemption, and bestows spiritual gifts upon each one at the moment of salvation. He also enables for service those yielded to Him. We believe that the Holy Spirit testifies concerning Jesus Christ and never leads any person, at any time, contrary to the teaching of the Bible. (John 14:16-17; 15:26; 16:7-15; I Corinthians 12:4-13; Ephesians 4:30; 5:18)
8. The “Church”
- a. We believe that the local Church, which is the body and the espoused bride of Christ, is solely made up of born-again persons. The Church is not a building but a gathering together of believers. (I Corinthians 12:12-14; II Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:25-27)
 - b. We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures. (Acts 14:27; 20:17, 28-32; I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11)
 - c. We believe in the autonomy of the local church free of any external authority or control. (Acts 13:1-4, 15:19-31, 20:28; Romans 16:1, 4; I Corinthians 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; I Peter 5:1-4)
 - d. We recognize water baptism and the Lord’s Supper as the Scriptural ordinances of obedience for the church in this age. These are not required for salvation. (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 18:18; I Corinthians 11:23-26)
 - e. We do not believe that the church today has replaced Israel as God’s chosen people. Because the Jews rejected the Messiah, the Gospel has come to the Gentiles and Jesus established His Church during this dispensation. God’s plan for Israel has not yet been completed.
9. The Ordinances:
- a. We believe Baptism is the immersion, one time, in water, of a believer pronounced in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit to show by solemn symbolism, the believer’s identification with Christ bound by His death, burial, and resurrection. We believe Baptism is an act of obedience and a prerequisite to local church membership. (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38-41; 8:36; Romans 6:3-5; I Peter 3:21)

- b. We believe the Lord's Supper is partaking of bread and the fruit of the vine, as symbols of Christ's body and blood, commemorating His suffering and death for us, that participation is for all those who are believers and have examined themselves for sin and are in fellowship with the Lord and others. (I Corinthians 11:23-29)

10. Spiritual Gifts and the Ministry:

- a. We believe for the purpose of winning the lost and strengthening believers, the Holy Spirit bestows His Spiritual gifts on members of the body at salvation according to His own will. Initially, some of these gifts were for use as signs for confirmation of the spoken word of the disciples. We believe, with the completion of the written Word of God in the New Testament Scriptures, these miraculous gifts, such as tongues, prophecy, and healing were no longer necessary and were replaced by permanently bestowed gifts as outlined in Romans 12 and I Corinthians 12. We believe, however, that God by His almighty power, still answers prayer in miraculous ways, in accordance with His own will to show His sovereignty and might. (I Corinthians 12:4-11; 13:8-10; Mark 16:20; Hebrew 2:4; Revelation 22:18-19)

11. Civil Government:

- a. We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home; 2) the Government and 3) the Church. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; II Corinthians 5:20)

12. Missions – We believe in the responsibility of each believer, motivated by the love of Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, to witness for Christ and to live sacrificially for the proclamation of the Gospel into all the world.

- a. We believe that God has given the church a great privilege and mission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe and ethnic group, and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors of Christ, we must use all available means to go locally and globally not waiting for any to come to us. (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; II Corinthians 5:20; Revelations 5:9)

13. Giving:

- a. We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to support his local church financially. We believe that God has established the tithe as a basis for giving, but that every Christian should also give other offerings, sacrificially and cheerfully, to the support of the church and for the relief of those in need, and to spread the Gospel. (Genesis 14:20; Proverbs 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; I Corinthians 16:2; II Corinthians 9:6-7; Galatians 6:6; Ephesians 4:28; I Timothy 5:17-18; I John 3:17)

14. Marriage, Family and Sexual Conduct:

- a. We believe that God created male and female as distinct acts of creation and that being male and female was an aspect of how they were created in His own image (Genesis 1:27 and 2:7; 18-19). Marriage is the joining of these two distinct genders into one flesh. Thus we believe that marriage is the union of one man and one woman, in a lifetime commitment to each other, and that marriage and the family constitute the foundation of civil society. (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4-6; Mark 10:6-8, I Corinthians 7:2; Ephesians 5:31, 33) Marriage provides for intimate companionship, pure sexual expression (Genesis 2:25; Ephesians 5:31-33), procreation, and reflects the relationship of Christ and His Church (Genesis 1:28; Proverbs 5:15-19; I Corinthians 7:1-5).
- b. Because God has created a man to leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife thus setting the very foundation of marriage between a man and woman, we believe that God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man, a woman, and Himself. Since marriage is a picture of Christ and the Church, the Church will only recognize marriages between one biological man and one biological woman. The mystery and miracle of a man and a woman becoming one in marriage is a celebration. Therefore, because marriage is a picture of Christ and His Church, marriage is a worship service as we honor God and His Word.
- c. We believe that children are a blessing from the Lord. Thus all human life is sacred and worthy of protection from the moment of conception. (Psalm 127 and 128; Psalm 139:13-16)
- d. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage between one man and one woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance (Genesis 2:24; Genesis 19:5, 13; Genesis 26:8-9; Exodus 20:14, 17, 19; Leviticus 18:1-30; Deuteronomy 22:15; Romans 1:26-29; I Corinthians 5:1; 6:9, 15-20; I Thessalonians 4:1-8; I Timothy 1:10-11; Hebrews 13:4). Such sinful patterns, if not repented, will be a barrier to membership, employment, and leadership in this church.

ARTICLE V: MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

As members of the Church, we agree and commit both as a body and individually, to support the Vision, Mission, Ministry, and Testimony of the Church as set forth in The Membership Covenant attached to and made part of this Constitution.

ARTICLE VI: POLITY AND RELATIONSHIPS

The church is set in order under the authority of the Bible and at the request of a company of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, on the following principles: it is to be scripturally independent as to its faith and government (Hebrews 6:12; Ephesians 4:11-12; I Corinthians 12:18-20); and in accord with the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth chapters of I Corinthians as to its conduct and practice; and in cooperative

fellowship with other bodies of believers who “contend for the faith that was delivered to the saints once for all” (Jude 3). Authority in the church is neither autocratic, nor oligarchy, nor democratic, but theocratic. The church has only one prevailing task: to find the will of God, and to do it.

ARTICLE VII: LICENSURE AND ORDINATION

SECTION 1: LICENSE TO MINISTER

Any man who has given evidence of scriptural specifications of a minister as stated in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-4, and testifies of a call of God to the gospel ministry and possesses the zeal and aptness to minister may be granted a license by the church to the Christian ministry .

Such license to minister will be granted when such a man has proven himself before the church, and is recommended by the Pastoral Leadership Team, and is approved by a majority vote of the church body.

SECTION 2: ORDINATION OF MINISTERS

When any licensed minister who has given further evidence of the call of God, and possesses the spiritual gifts of a minister, is confirmed by the Pastoral Leadership Team, requests in writing that he be ordained, the Senior Pastor shall convene an ordination council made up of pastors of like faith to conduct the process of his ordination.

SECTION 3: COMMISSIONING OF MISSIONARIES

In the matter of commissioning missionaries to represent our church in the harvest fields of the world, we believe that the local church is a sending agency for the missionary (Acts 13:1-3), working in cooperation with mission boards and agencies approved by the Pastoral Leadership Team and the mission’s committees.

ARTICLE VIII: ORDINANCES

SECTION 1: BAPTISM

After a person receives Jesus Christ as Savior by grace through faith and professes Him publicly indicating a commitment to follow Christ as Lord, he shall become a candidate for Baptism.

- 1) Baptism shall be total immersion in water
- 2) The Senior Pastor shall administer the ordinance of Baptism.
- 3) The Senior Pastor, other ordained pastor, or any believer designated by the Senior Pastor may perform Baptism
- 4) Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship at any Worship Service

SECTION 2: LORD'S SUPPER

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby baptized believers, 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 should be observed at least once a quarter as practical.
- 2) The Senior Pastor, Pastoral Staff and/or the Deacon Team shall be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper.

ARTICLE IX: AFFILIATION

The Church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs, independent of any denominational control. However, the Bible teaches that local churches should seek voluntary fellowship with other doctrinally sound churches. This association is to provide help and encouragement while working together as the Lord directs. In no way does this voluntary association involve the surrender of the individual church's freedom or dependence on God.

The Church has chosen to affiliate itself with the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) national convention and the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia (SBCV) state convention. We continue this relationship, believing that it is God's will to do so. Fundamental to these affiliations is the understanding that the SBC and the SBCV are fellowships of autonomous, biblically sound churches that choose to work together to further God's Kingdom. Voluntary contributions to local, state, national, and international mission's projects maintain this affiliation. Cooperation may also be provided by sending messengers to the State and National Conventions for voting on doctrinal, ethical, and procedural positions. (Acts 15:2; 21:17-18; III John 10; Philippians 4:15, 18; I John 1:3; Ephesians 4:3-6)

ARTICLE X: CONDUCTING CHURCH AFFAIRS

The conduct of the affairs of the Church not addressed in the Articles of Incorporation or this Constitution will be outlined in the Bylaws of Southside Baptist Church of Suffolk. These bylaws define the Church's organizational structure, the responsibilities of members in the structure, and the procedures for exercising those rights.

ARTICLE XI: AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Members may propose changes to the Constitution. They shall be submitted to the Pastoral Leadership Team, and/or Deacon Team for consideration and comment. This constitution may be amended, altered, or repealed by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the members present at two consecutive members' meetings at which a quorum is present, provided the proposed amendment shall have been presented in writing and announced from the pulpit thirty (30) days prior to each meeting.

THE SOUTHSIDE MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and been baptized, and being in agreement with Southside's statements of faith, strategy, and structure and agree to follow its governing documents, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the Southside church family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other church members to do the following:

1. I WILL PROTECT THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH

...By acting in love toward other members.

...By refusing to gossip.

...By following the leaders.

2. I WILL SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MY CHURCH

...By praying for its growth.

...By inviting the un-churched to attend

...By warmly welcoming those who visit.

3. I WILL SERVE THE MINISTRY OF MY CHURCH

...By discovering my gifts and talents.

...By being equipped to serve by my pastors.

...By developing a servant's heart.

4. I WILL SUPPORT THE TESTIMONY OF MY CHURCH

...By attending faithfully.

...By living a godly life.

...By giving regularly.

BYLAWS OF SOUTHSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH OF SUFFOLK

ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1: GENERAL

All present members of Southside Baptist Church shall agree to be bound by the Articles, Constitution, and Bylaws of the new church corporation, become members of this church. No member of this church, nor any officer, nor any member of the Pastoral Leadership Team shall by virtue of such membership, office, or position, incur or be subject to personal liability to any extent for any indebtedness, obligations, acts, or omissions of this corporation.

SECTION 2: QUALIFICATIONS

The standard of membership of this church shall be: (1) evidence of a genuine testimony of salvation (John 1:12-14; John 3:3-8; and I Peter 1:23-25); (2) evidence of a consistent Christian life (Romans 6:4; Romans 8:1-4; Romans 13:13-14; Ephesians 4:1-2,15,17-32; Ephesians 5:1,2,15; and I John 1:6,7); (3) Baptism in water by immersion (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 10:47-48; Romans 6:3-12; Colossians 2:11-12); (4) full subscriptions to the tenets of faith as set forth in the Constitution and Bylaws adopted by the church by attending and completing our New Members class; (5) willingness to contribute regularly to the support of the church according to his or her ability through tithes and offerings (Malachi 3:10; Matthew 23:23; Hebrews 7:4); and, (6) support of the church with regular attendance at services (Hebrews 10:25).

SECTION 3: CANDIDACY

Anyone meeting the above listed qualifications may become a candidate for membership in the Church by declaring his or her intent to do so as a new convert by baptism, by affirmation of faith. Each candidate will meet with one of the Pastors to share their testimony of salvation and baptism.

1) New Converts

Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as his or her personal Savior and giving evidence of the New Birth may be received into the membership of the Church. The convert must complete the New Members Class and be baptized. The candidate will then be presented to the Church in a Sunday morning worship service and upon affirmation by the Church membership, the person will become an official member with all inherent rights.

2) Affirmation of Faith

Any person who is a member, of good standing, in a church of like faith, but having professed Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and having then received baptism by immersion may be received into the membership of the church after meeting with one of the Pastors and sharing their

personal testimony of faith in Christ. The person must complete the New Members Class. If the person has not been baptized by immersion, they must be baptized and complete the New Members Class. The candidate will then be presented to the Church in a Sunday morning worship service and upon affirmation by the Church membership, the person will become an official member with all inherent rights.

3) *New Members Class*

Candidates for membership in the church must be taught by the pastor, pastoral staff member, or a member appointed by the pastor. This class is taught as needed and includes instruction in Bible doctrine, witnessing, church membership responsibilities, and other related subjects. All candidates for membership will be required to take the New Members Class.

4) *Designation of Membership*

To properly and accurately reflect the membership of the church, three rolls shall be maintained as follows by the Church Clerk.

- a. Members in Good Standing/Voting Members. These members have met all the above membership qualifications, are currently active in the church, and are not under church discipline. An Active Member is one who attends a Life Group, Sunday School, Worship Service or a Wednesday service or class at least twice a month and regularly gives financially to the Church. We recognize that there may be unique circumstances, such as a shut in or an extended physical illness, that would prohibit someone from being present at least twice a month. In those cases, the Pastoral Leadership Team would make a decision concerning this matter.
- b. Age limitations on voting responsibilities are set out below.
- c. Inactive Members. An inactive member is one who is not attending a Life Group, Sunday School, Worship Service or a Wednesday service or class at least twice a month and regularly giving financially to the Church. Unique circumstances will be considered by the Pastoral Leadership Team.

SECTION 4: RESPONSIBILITY OF MEMBERS

Members are expected to:

- 1) Surrender to Christ as the Head of the Church;
- 2) Agree with the biblical doctrine of Southside Baptist Church;
- 3) Utilize their spiritual gifts by participating in ministry opportunities;
- 4) Support the financial needs of the Church; and
- 5) Be faithful in all duties essential to Christian life.

Members and Ministry

Once a new member has met all the requirements for membership and has completed the New Members Class, they will be asked to serve in the Greeter Ministry for at least a period of 6 months. This will help them get to know other members in the church and a time for the Lord to work in their hearts as it relates to serving in other ministries. Before a new member can be considered for a ministry here at Southside in a leadership position of a teacher, deacons or lay Pastor, they would need to have been an active member here for at least a year. I Timothy 5:22.

SECTION 5: VOTING RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

All members present, 18 years of age and older, who are not under church discipline, shall have an equal opportunity to express opinions on business matters. Every voting member, age eighteen (18) or older, shall have the right to vote on the following matters (with listed percentages for approval):

- 1) Annual Budget—simple majority
- 2) Election of lay members of the Board or other church officers as provided in these Bylaws—simple majority
- 3) Dissolving or disposition of all, or substantially all, of the church assets—3/4 vote
- 4) Acquisition or sale of real property or building projects and related indebtedness—3/4 vote
- 5) Amendments to the Constitution – 3/4 vote
- 6) Amendments to the Bylaws—3/4 vote
- 7) Calling or removal of the Senior Pastor—3/4 vote
- 8) Any other major event or decision as designated by the Board—simple majority unless the Bylaws provide otherwise.

Voting by proxy is prohibited.

SECTION 6: TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

1) *Transfer of Letter*

When a member of good standing declares their intent to join a church of similar faith and order, a letter of dismissal will be issued thereby ending the person's membership with Southside Baptist Church.

2) *Other Transfers*

When a member in good standing declares their intent to join a church of different faith and order, membership in this church will terminate.

3) *Death*

Membership will automatically end and be recorded appropriately on the church rolls upon the death of a member. Home going will be remembered at the quarterly Members' Meeting.

4) *Voluntary Resignation*

A member may voluntarily resign his membership by written notification to the Church and mutual consent of the membership during a regular or called Members' Meeting.

5) *Discipline*

If a member becomes involved in activities or lifestyle contrary to the Scriptures and Membership Covenant of the Church, the Pastoral Leadership Team, deacons and membership shall exhaustively seek restoration of fellowship and reconciliation of the offending member. If such efforts prove ineffective and the member continues to sin without repentance, the person may be dismissed from membership in accordance with the Statement of Church Discipline.

6) *Loss of Contact*

Regardless of reason, any member who does not have contact with the church, either by attendance or by financial contribution for a period of one year shall be placed on the inactive roll. The Pastoral Leadership Team, Life Group and Sunday School Teachers and Deacons will seek restoration of fellowship and reconciliation of the member. If these measures prove ineffective and the period of non-involvement extends beyond two years, the person's membership shall be terminated upon mutual consent of the membership during a regular or called Members' Meeting. The church shall use the Membership Covenant as the guideline for interpreting these actions. Only by action of the Pastoral Leadership Team can the inactive status of a member continue past the two-year interval.

7) Relocation

Upon mutual consent of the membership during a regular or called Members' Meeting, a member who relocates to another area may be removed from the roll if after two years, the church has not been provided a new address or the church office after diligent search is unable to locate the member. If a member is removed from the roll, their name shall be retained for future reference.

SECTION 7: STATEMENT OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Church discipline is the corrective process that God has given to the church, Matthew 18, I Timothy 5:18-20, when a member persists in sin. Church discipline is intended neither to humiliate someone nor to seek revenge. It is an expression of God's fatherly love, for the LORD disciplines the one He loves. Those involved in bringing this correction are to be motivated by sincere love and their words and actions are to combine both grace and truth.

God calls every believer to be conformed into the image of His Son. This involves hearing and obeying God's Word. It results in the believer disciplining his own self into subjection to the Savior by diligently applying God's Word to his own life.

Although every believer has been declared righteous in Christ, spiritual growth is a process of gradual change. Every Christian will exhibit flaws and imperfections and every relationship will include some measure of tension and disharmony. Such offenses do not often endanger the safety or well-being of a believer, a relationship or a church and are best overlooked in a manner of grace and forgiveness. All the more, believers should daily encourage one another so that no one is hardened by sin's deception.

When self-discipline fails and a member sins in a manner that should not be overlooked, someone who is spiritually well-disciplined should go to the member privately seeking to restore such a person with a spirit of gentleness, being careful to watch out for their own self so as not to be tempted also. If the member listens and repents, no further action is needed. If the member will not listen, then it will be necessary to involve one or two more other members, so that by the testimony of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed and upheld. If the member does not listen to them, it shall be made known to the Pastoral Leadership Team, who will review what steps have been taken and then continue the process of discipline or restoration.

The process of Church Discipline:

We believe we have a responsibility before God to practice church discipline, as taught by the Word of God; and all who accept membership in this assembly shall voluntarily submit themselves to this scriptural practice. (Matthew 18:15-17; Romans 16:17-20; I Corinthians 5:1-11; I Thessalonians 4:11-12; II Thessalonians 3:6-15; I Timothy 1:20; 5:19-21; II Timothy 2:17-18; 4:2-4; Titus 1:9-14; 3:9-11; II John 9-11; III John 9-10)

We believe, especially the following sins, shall be disciplined by the church:

1. Irresolvable difference between members. Matthew 18:15-17, I Corinthians 5:11
2. Teaching of false doctrine. Roman 16:17; I Corinthians 5:11; II Corinthians 6:14-18; I Timothy 1:20; II Timothy 2:17-18; 4:2-4; Titus 1:9-11; 3:10-11; Jude 4

3. Immorality and disorderliness. Romans 13:1; I Corinthians 5:11; Ephesians 5:11; II Thessalonians 3:6; I Timothy 5:20; Titus 3:10; III John 9-10

Concerning differences between individuals or sins not generally known, the wronged party shall follow steps set forth in Galatians 6:1 and Matthew 18:15-17. A person making a matter public or bringing it before the church, prior to following this scriptural procedure, shall himself be subject to rebuke.

4. Matters of formal accusation shall be:
 - a. Public sin or sin known by the church generally; or
 - b. Holding or persistently propagating false doctrine; or
 - c. Becoming opposed to the Doctrine of Southside Baptist Church.
5. Procedures for handling formal accusations:
 - a. A formal accusation is brought before the Pastoral Leadership Team with the specific accusations in writing and signed.
 - i. If the accused is in a leadership position, that person will be placed under administrative leave of their position until the accusation is proven. Paid staff will continue to receive their salary during this time.
 - ii. The Pastor and one additional Pastor will then proceed as necessary in order to verify the charges, including confrontation with the accused. In matters falling under false doctrine or becoming opposed to the doctrine of the church, the Pastor will notify the accused in writing one week in advance of the initial meeting.
 - iii. If the charges are found to not be valid, the accused shall be restored. As necessary, the accuser shall then be confronted to determine if church discipline is necessary.
6. If the charge is verified, the following process shall be followed:
 - a. If the accused is repentant, then:
 - i. The Pastoral Leadership Team shall proceed with steps necessary to restore the individual into good standing with the church.
 - ii. Continued counseling will proceed as determined necessary by the Pastor.
 - iii. If the accused is in a leadership position or a paid staff member, the PCT will consider the recommendation from the Pastoral Leadership Team before a decision to dismiss, remove, or place on unpaid leave, as applicable.
 - b. If the accused remains unrepentant, then:
 - i. The Pastoral Leadership Team shall determine if the situation warrants expulsion of the accused from membership and proceed to step 3 below.
 - ii. If the accused is in a leadership position or a paid staff member, the PCT will consider the recommendation from the Pastoral Leadership Team before a decision to dismiss, remove, or place on unpaid leave, as applicable.
7. Review by the church:
 - a. If the accused has resigned from membership, no further hearing, public or otherwise, is to be held before the church.
 - b. If the accused has not resigned, then
 - i. He or she may appear at a designated meeting of the voting church membership for a hearing. If the accused declines to appear, the church may proceed with the hearing.
 - ii. Evidence will be presented to the church by one of the Pastors.
 - iii. At any hearing, the accused may call another church member as an advocate.
 - iv. At the close of the hearing, the congregation shall vote by ballot to determine if the accused is to be removed from membership. If the accused is found guilty by two-

thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting, that person must be stricken from membership.

- v. A statement of exclusion, including reasons and admonitions, with scriptural references, shall then be presented to that person by mail.

8. Restoration:

- a. If at any time the individual repents during this process, the Pastoral Leadership Team shall determine the appropriate timeframe and steps to restore the individual to the fellowship of the church. Reinstatement of membership shall be included if termination had already occurred.

Anyone seeking to unite with Southside Baptist Church but having been excluded from another church, will not be allowed to partake of the ordinances, become a member or participate in the fellowship of the church until they have made a reasonable effort to be reconciled with their former church and completed the New Members Class.

ARTICLE II: MEETINGS

SECTION 1: WORSHIP SERVICES

The Church shall meet regularly for the worship of Almighty God. Worship services shall be scheduled for preaching, instruction and evangelism all of which will be focused on 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 or as stipulated by the Church.

SECTION 2: SPECIAL SERVICES

Revival services and any other Church meetings essential to the advancement of the Church's objectives shall be placed on the Church calendar.

SECTION 3: ANNUAL MEETING

The Church shall hold an annual members' meeting at a date, time, and place to be determined by the Pastoral Leadership Team and Deacon Team. The notice of meeting shall specify the date, time, and place of the meeting.

SECTION 4: REGULAR MEMBERS' MEETINGS

The Church shall hold regular quarterly members' meetings. The date and time shall be designated by the Pastoral Leadership Team and Deacon Team. The members shall be given notice of the meeting by publication in the Church bulletin, mail-outs, electronic transmission, or announcement at a Worship Service not less than two (2) weeks prior to the meeting.

SECTION 5: SPECIAL MEMBERS' MEETINGS

No special members' meetings shall be called without two (2) weeks' notice. The Church may conduct called members' meetings to consider matters of a special nature and significance. A called meeting shall be requested by the Pastor, Pastoral Leadership Team, the Deacon Team, or a church committee. The members shall be given a ten (10) day notice unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical. The notice shall include the subject, the date, time and place; and it must be given by publication in the Church bulletin, mail-out or announcements at Worship Service.

SECTION 6: QUORUM AND MAJORITY

A quorum exists when a number of Voting Members in good standing equal to at least ten (10%) percent of the preceding month's average Sunday School attendance is present at a duly called meeting, except for the calling of a Pastor or Ministerial Staff position, where thirty (30%) percent is necessary. If quorum is not met at that meeting, then another meeting shall be called, with proper notice given. At a second meeting, requirements for quorum are satisfied by any number of active Members present. In determining the result of a vote, the required majority shall be of those voting, without consideration of those present and not voting.

SECTION 7: PARLIAMENTARY RULES

All Church members' meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, most current revision.

The Church shall elect a Parliamentarian who will assist and advise the Moderator on the rules and usage of parliamentary procedure.

ARTICLE III: CHURCH OFFICERS AND STAFF

SECTION 1: SENIOR PASTOR

1) Qualifications

- a. The Senior Pastor shall meet the Scriptural qualifications as outlined in I Timothy 3: 1-7.
- b. The Senior Pastor shall be ordained.

2) Responsibilities

- a. The responsibilities of the Senior Pastor fall into the following broad categories: preaching, teaching, evangelism, pastoral counseling, administration, planning, and guiding the church to grow and fulfill its purposes.

- b. The Senior Pastor shall lead the church and its organizations in performing their tasks in worship, proclamation, education, and evangelism.
- c. The Senior Pastor or his Ministerial Staff designee shall be a member of all church Standing Ministry Teams, except the Senior Pastor Search Team.
- d. The Senior Pastor shall secure pulpit supply for times of his absence.
- e. No person shall be invited to speak, preach, perform, or otherwise minister in the church without the consent of the Senior Pastor. In general, the Senior Pastor is expected to exercise his authority in plurality with the Pastoral Leadership Team and the Deacon Team.

3) *Vacancy and Call*

- a. The Pastoral Leadership Team will work with the remaining ministerial staff to ensure qualified men are scheduled to preach during the transition time.
- b. A Senior Pastor shall be chosen and called whenever a vacancy occurs.
- c. A Senior Pastor Search Team shall be elected by the church to seek out a suitable Senior Pastor and their recommendation shall constitute a nomination.
- d. The Nominating Team, in joint consultation with the Pastoral Leadership Team, will nominate a Senior Pastor Search Team to the church for approval at a duly called members meeting. The Search Team should be comprised of at least seven members, and not more than nine members, two of which must be women, and two of which must be deacons (active or inactive), at least one from the Pastoral Leadership Team. The chairman of the Search Team should be a deacon who has completed at least one 3 year term on the Deacon Team.
- e. The Team will recommend only one candidate at a time.
- f. The Team will give members at least two (2) weeks' notice of the presentation of the candidate.
- g. Prior to presentation of the candidate for election, the Senior Pastor Search Team shall schedule a testimonial and question and answer session with the church.
- h. The Senior Pastor's election will occur by ballot at the conclusion of the Sunday morning service on the day the Senior Pastor candidate is presented with all ballots counted at the conclusion of the last Sunday morning service.

- i. Election will be by secret ballot and an affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the voting members present and in good standing is necessary.

4) *Term of Service*

- a. The Senior Pastor shall serve until his resignation or until the church terminates the relationship. In either case, at least thirty (30) days written notice shall be given unless otherwise mutually agreed or in the event of essential moral failure or essential biblical heresy as defined by our Statement of Faith.
 - i. Essential moral failure includes, but is not limited to, adultery, embezzlement, inappropriate sexual contact, pornography, lying, deceiving, etc. Accusations of this nature require hard evidence, not suspicion or opinion. Unless found to be intentional, things that do not qualify as moral failures are such things as: misunderstandings, mistakes, poor judgment, overstatements, miscommunications, showing emotions, verbal missteps and forgetfulness.
 - ii. Essential biblical failures are doctrinal issues that would directly contradict the Bible or the theological beliefs outlined in our Constitution. Areas that do not qualify as an essential biblical failure are things such as philosophy of ministry, areas of Scripture that are open to interpretation among Baptists, and personal convictions.
- b. If two (2) or more persons (with preference to unrelated individuals) have a grievance against the Senior Pastor, the offended parties must bring the matter before the Pastoral Leadership Team in writing. After prayer and thorough investigation, if the Pastoral Leadership Team determines that the conduct of the Senior Pastor is an essential moral failure or essential biblical heresy, the Pastoral Leadership Team shall confer with the Deacons, and when in unity they will refer the matter to the church body which by three-quarters (3/4) vote to recommend the dismissal of the Senior Pastor at a duly called Regular or Special Members' meeting. Written notice will be provided to the members in accordance with these Bylaws.
- c. The vote to declare the position of Senior Pastor vacant shall be by voice vote. An affirmative vote of seventy-five percent (3/4) of the voting members present and in good standing is necessary.

SECTION 2: DEACONS

Deacons are first and foremost Servant Leaders. The words translated "Deacon" in the Scripture means "servant." Deacons are to serve the body of Christ in support of the ministry of the Pastoral Staff. This ministry of service is further defined in the Policies and Procedures Manual.

1) *Number of Deacons.*

The Pastoral Leadership Team shall recommend to the church for approval qualified men to serve as Deacons as needed to assign one per Adult and Student Sunday School Class.

2) Term of Service

- a. A Deacon will be elected for one (1) year as characteristics and qualifications are manifested and can serve for consecutive terms if so desired by the Deacon in question and agreed upon by the Pastoral Leadership Team and Chairman of the Board of Deacons.

3) Minimum Qualifications

- a. Each Deacon shall meet the qualifications listed in Acts 6:3-8 and I Timothy 3:8-13.
 - i. His Character:
 - (i) **“Grave”** - A Deacon should be a man that is worthy of respect, a man of character and integrity that flows from his faith and the change that has been brought about in his life from salvation. The idea is that this position of servant leadership is important and a priority in that he sees this responsibility seriously and serves to meet needs instead of being one who has the title but is not making any investment.
 - (ii) **“Not Double-tongued”** – A Deacon speaks the truth to everyone and does not participate in gossip. He does not say one thing to one person and then turn around and say something to another.
 - (iii) **“Not given to much wine”** – As a Servant Leader, the Deacon must at times choose what is expedient, (to be the better for, profitable) choose what is edifying for the Body of Christ. I Corinthians 10:23. Therefore, we ask that the man who is serving as a Deacon at Southside Baptist Church abstain from the use of alcohol.
 - (iv) **“Not Greedy of filthy lucre”** – A Deacon should not be focused on dishonest gain. This speaks of not craving wealth and seeking dishonest ways to obtain it.
 - (v) **“Holding the mystery of faith in a pure conscience”** – A Deacon must be a growing student of the Word, growing in his ability to handle the Word of God with understanding.
 - (vi) **“First be proved”** - amplified vs 10 - “These men must first be tested; then if they are found to be blameless and beyond reproach, let them serve as deacons”
 - (vii) **“Blameless”** vs. 10 – Being above reproach speaks to every area of our lives. We must regularly examine our lives to see that we are walking in the Spirit being obedient to the Word of God. Remember that being blameless means that nothing sticks to you that is sin because you are being obedient to the leading of the Spirit of God.
 - ii. His Wife:
 - (i) **“Grave”** - A Deacon’s wife should be a woman that is worthy of respect, a woman of character and integrity that flows from her faith and the change that has been brought about in her life from salvation. The idea is that this position of servant leadership with her husband is important and a priority in that she sees this

responsibility seriously and serves to meet needs instead of being one in a role but is not making any investment.

- (ii) **“Not Slanderers”** – She cannot be one who is given to being slanderous, falsely accusing others.
- (iii) **“Sober”** – This speaks of being vigilant, temperate. A woman of self-control in her own life as well as the ministry she will have in the lives of others.
- (iv) **“Faithful in all things”** – She sees her role as a Deacon’s wife as a priority in that she is found to be faithful in ministry. That which she does, she does well. It is also the picture of one who is present rather than absent.

iii. His Family:

- (i) **“Husband of one wife”**: We will evaluate future Deacon candidates regarding this qualification by:
 - 1. If their spouse has passed away and they have remarried they are eligible to serve in the office of Deacon.
 - 2. If the divorce took place prior to their salvation, then it is possible they could still serve in the office of Deacon. The Pastoral Leadership Team would consider the story and see if the Lord leads us to consider this man.
 - 3. If there was a divorce, and through that time of separation one of them chooses to marry another, then we believe that brings death to the marriage and the one who is still single is now free to marry. This could result in a man being considered for the office of Deacon.
- (ii) **“ruling their children and their own house well”** – A Deacon should have a testimony of loving his wife and leading his family. This is visible when it is taking place in a family.

- b. Each Deacon shall have been a member of the church for at least one year prior to nomination.
- c. Each prospective Deacon shall complete the 1 year Timothy program before being vested with the office of Deacon.
- d. Deacon shall have been a Christian for at least three (3) years.
- e. Each Deacon must be willing to verify that he fulfills the Biblical qualifications and will support the church expectations as outlined in the Deacon Ministry Manual.

4) Election

- a. The Pastoral Leadership Team and the chairman of the Deacon Team will serve to nominate deacons as needed for the health of the Body at Southside.
 - i. Qualifications, duties, and expectations of a Deacon will be made available to the church body.

- ii. The Pastor, Chairman of the Board of Deacons or one member of the Pastoral Leadership Team, shall be designated to interview each deacon candidate and to review with him the responsibilities and character requirements.
- iii. The Pastoral Leadership Team shall then present their recommended deacons to the Deacon Team for their consent, and then the deacon nominees for the next term shall be submitted for church vote at the appropriate membership meeting or a special called membership meeting by the Deacon Team.

5) Ordination

- a. Selection, election, and ordination of Deacons are privileges of the church.
- b. A Deacon Ordination service shall be scheduled by the Senior Pastor for elected Deacons that are not ordained by Southside Baptist Church or another church of like faith and practice.

6) Deacon Offices and Duties

- a. The officers of the Deacons shall be:
 - i. Chairman (third year deacon or has served longer as a Deacon)
 - ii. First Vice Chairman (Second year deacon)
 - iii. Secretary
 - iv. Others as deemed necessary by the Pastoral Staff or Chairman of the Deacons
- b. The duties of the officers shall be:

7) Chairman

- a. To organize the Deacon Team for service
- b. To lead the Deacon Prayer Chain
- c. To serve as Deacon to the church staff and other Deacons
- d. To work with the First and Second Vice Chairmen in the training and fulfillment of their duties

8) First Vice Chairman

- a. To lead the Benevolence Team for the Church
- b. To learn the duties and functions of the Chairman
- c. To train the Second Vice Chairman

9) Secretary

- a. To take and transcribe the minutes at all Deacons meetings

- b. To publish the minutes for distribution to the Deacons

SECTION 3: ASSOCIATE PASTORS AND MINISTRY DIRECTORS

The church shall call Associate Pastors and Ministry Directors as the need arises. For each such position, there shall be a written, executed contract that shall include a written job description. Associate Pastors and Ministry Directors shall be called by the church upon the selection and recommendation of the Senior Pastor and Personnel Care Team. Associate Pastors and Ministry Directors shall serve under the Senior Pastor (or his designee) and will be presented to the church under the guidelines found in the Church Ministry Guidelines and the Personnel Manual in regards to salary and benefits.

SECTION 4: TREASURER

The church shall annually elect a Treasurer who shall serve as chairman of the Finance Team and have oversight and responsibility of the church funds and securities donated to the church. The Treasurer shall also oversee full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements belonging to the church and shall oversee the deposit of all monies and other valuable effects in the name and to the credit of the church in such depositories as may be designated by the Board of Deacons. Those funds shall be disbursed only by such persons as may be designated by the Pastoral Leadership Team or their designated leadership team and in accordance with the Policies and Procedures Manual. The Treasurer shall make financial reports available to the Board and for Members at the Annual Members Meeting and other such Members meetings where a financial report is deemed necessary. Proper records and books concerning incoming and outgoing funds shall be kept and such records and books shall be made available for auditing or inspection.

SECTION 5: MODERATOR

The Moderator of all members' meetings of the church shall be the Senior Pastor. In his absence the Chairman of the Deacon Team, or in his absence the Church Clerk, shall call the church to order and a moderator pro tem shall be elected. The moderator should be skilled in presiding over meetings and knowledgeable of the Roberts' Rules of Order and be aware of Church policies and procedures and the functions of all Church committees.

SECTION 6: CHURCH CLERK

The church shall elect annually a clerk whose duties shall include keeping, in a suitable format, a record of all actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. They are responsible for keeping a register of the names of members, with dates of admission, dismissal, or death, together with a record of baptisms. They shall issue letters of dismissal or transfer voted by the church, preserve on file all communications and written official report, and give legal notice of all meetings where such notice is necessary, as indicated in these bylaws. The church may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to assistant clerks or staff. All church records are church property and shall be filled in the church office or other designated secure location.

In the event the regularly elected clerk should not be present or is incapacitated the acting moderator shall appoint a substitute until the return of the regular clerk or until another clerk is duly elected. Unless otherwise directed by the Pastoral Leadership Team and the church Body, the role of Church Clerk shall be fulfilled by the Church Secretary.

SECTION 7: SUPPORT STAFF

The church shall employ Support Staff as the need develops. The Pastors and Ministry Directors in conjunction with the Personnel Care Team will have the responsibility to develop a job description in accordance with the Personnel Manual and they will jointly make a recommendation to the Finance Team regarding salary and benefits. The church will be furnished with this information prior to voting to create a position. Once a position has been approved, it is the responsibility of the supervising staff member to fill the position. Employees will be supervised in accordance with the Personnel Manual.

ARTICLE IV: MINISTRY TEAMS / COMMITTEES

SECTION 1: GENERAL

1) Definitions

- a. Standing: Elected teams with limits to consecutive terms served.

The Standing Ministry Teams shall be (1) the Nominating Team, (2) the Personnel Care Team, and (3) the Finance Team.

- b. Regular: Appointed teams, members having no limit to consecutive terms served.
- c. Ad Hoc: Temporary teams created for a specific purpose and a defined period of time. The church shall have the authority to form Ad Hoc Teams at any Regular or Called Members' Meeting to perform specific studies or tasks for a defined period to be determined by the church under the leadership of the Senior Pastor or his designee.

2) Number of Members

Each Ministry Team will be composed of no fewer than three (3) members. The size of each Ministry Team will be determined by the needs of the church as advised by the Ministry Team Chairperson and the Ministerial Staff designee. A member of the Ministerial Staff, as appointed by the Senior Pastor, shall be an ex-officio member of each Regular Ministry Team, serving as a resource person and liaison.

3) Chairperson Selection

Unless otherwise stated in these by-laws, the chairpersons of each Standing Ministry Team will be selected by the Nominating Team for the following church year. The person serving as the chair of a standing team must have served at least one year on the Standing Team before being considered to serve as chair. No person shall concurrently serve as chair of more than one Standing Ministry Team. The chair person for each team will need to be fulfilled by a man so that we do not place any woman in a position of usurping authority over a man. I Timothy 2:12

SECTION 2: APPOINTMENT AND ELECTION

- 1) The Nominating Team will nominate Standing Ministry Team members and will appoint other Ministry Team members along with the person to serve as the team chair. The church will elect Standing Ministry Team members at a Called Members' Meeting prior to the start of the church year. Ministry Team memberships will run concurrently with the calendar year.
- 2) The Nominating Team will be nominated by the Deacon Team in consultation with the Senior Pastor.
- 3) Standing Ministry Team members may complete a maximum of three (3) consecutive one-year terms as a member of the same Ministry Team. A one-year waiting period must then be observed before becoming eligible for nomination to another Standing Ministry Team.
- 4) All other Ministry Team members will be appointed to one-year terms with no limit to consecutive terms.
- 5) Persons completing a partial term may then be reelected to fulfill a full term.
- 6) Persons may be appointed or elected to serve on no more than one Standing Ministry Team.
- 7) All Standing Ministry Team members shall be tithing members.
- 8) Appointments to fill vacancies due to illness, death, or other special circumstances may be made on an interim basis by the Nominating Team pending approval of the church.

SECTION 3: STANDING MINISTRY TEAMS

1) *Nominating Team*

The Nominating Team shall consist of at least seven (7) members one of which must be or have been deacons.

This team is responsible for nominating members to the standing ministry teams, church offices, and other ministry teams and positions as deemed necessary by the pastor, deacons, or membership. Effort shall be made to survey the congregation, seek input from

church leadership, to involve members of biblical character and representative of the congregation as a whole. Communication of who ministry team members are shall be made to the congregation.

2) *Finance Team*

The Finance Team shall consist of the church Treasurer, the finance secretary, and 3 at-large members who are nominated by the Nominating Team and elected by the church for 3 year terms. The Treasurer shall serve as the Chairman of the Finance Team. Regarding budget development, the finance team shall consult with and work in partnership with the Personnel Care Team, church staff, deacons, and various ministry leaders of the church.

The Finance Team shall oversee the collection, administration, and distribution of such funds. Throughout the church year, the Finance Team shall meet regularly to assure the integrity of the church financial systems, as well as provide reports to the church on a quarterly basis during the regularly scheduled meetings. The volunteer church treasurer shall carry out the policies developed and overseen by the Finance Team. The Finance Team shall oversee the distribution of the general fund, per the annual budget that has been approved by the church.

3) *Personnel Care Team*

A Personnel Care Team shall consist of at least six (6) members two of which must be or have been deacons, nominated as needed by the Nominating Team and elected by the church.

The Personnel Committee assists the Church in matters related to employed personnel administration, including those called or elected by Church action. Their duties include evaluating and recommending staff needs, employment, salaries, benefits, other compensation policies, and job descriptions to the Church. They shall also arbitrate employee disputes and recommend action to the Church, in consultation with the pastor and deacons. Any grievance or conflict regarding a pastoral staff member shall be handled in conjunction with the Pastoral Leadership Team as outlined in the bylaw section related to the office of pastor.

SECTION 5: MINISTRY LEADERSHIP MEETINGS & ADVISORY GROUP

To promote unity, vision, communication, and planning, the senior pastor, pastoral and ministry staff, shall provide meetings with ministry leadership from across the various ministries and functions of the church as needed. This may be done in consultation with the various standing

ministry teams, deacons, and church operations team, small group teachers, age group leaders, and ministry leaders in the church.

SECTION 6: OTHER TEAMS AND MINISTRIES

All additional teams and ministries shall be accountable to the church, under the direction of the Ministerial Staff. In addition, the church may request at any time a special report on any aspect of any team or ministry. Names and purposes of additional teams and ministries will be found in the Church Ministry Guidelines.

ARTICLE V: Pastoral Leadership Team (BOARD OF DIRECTORS)

Section 1: Purpose:

Pastoral Leadership Team – Southside Baptist Church functions under the leadership of the Holy Spirit working through the Pastoral Leadership Team consisting of our Pastoral Staff and Lay Pastors. These men provide spiritual leadership and serve Southside by fulfilling the responsibilities contained in this section.

Section 2: Qualifications of a Lay Pastor

1. A Lay Pastor shall possess the qualifications described in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 and be a member of this church according to Article III of this Constitution. He shall be: blameless and above reproach; husband of one wife (see Article III, Section 1.); temperate, sober and vigilant; sober-minded and prudent; of good behavior, orderly and respectable; given to hospitality; able to teach; willing to exhort believers and refute false doctrine and false teaching; not given to wine or strong drink; not violent; patient, moderate, forbearing; not a brawler, not soon given to anger or quick tempered; not covetous; rules well his own house and has faithful children; not a new convert; have a good report and reputation with outsiders; not self-willed; a lover of God; just and fair; self-controlled; holy and devout.
2. He shall be an ordained minister (or a candidate for ordination as approved by the Pastoral Leadership Team), subscribing without reservation to the doctrine and covenant contained herein and willing to uphold this Constitution.

Section 3: Lay Pastor Responsibility:

1. The Lay Pastors assist the Pastor of the church who are to protect the church from false teachers. (Acts 20:17, 28-29; Acts 15:6)
2. The Lay Pastors assist the Pastor of the church and must be able to teach the Word. (I Timothy 5:17-18; Titus 1:5, 9; I Timothy 3:2)
3. The Lay Pastors assist the Pastor of the church to lead, govern and care for the local church. (I Peter 5:1-3; I Timothy 5:17; I Thessalonians 5:12-13; I Timothy 3:5; Acts 11:30; I Timothy 4:14)

Section 4: Pastoral Leadership Team will:

1. The New Testament Lay and Full-Time Pastors form the pastoral body of the local church. They are to protect the church from false teachers, exhort the saints in sound doctrine, teach, preach, visit, pray for the sick, and judge doctrinal issues. In a broader sense they lead, oversee, shepherd, and care for the local church.
2. A Lay Pastor shall be free to resign as he feels led of the Holy Spirit.
3. Upon recommendation of the Pastor, dismissal proceedings may be in order against a Lay Pastor on grounds of proven immorality, heresy in doctrine, apostasy, or failing to properly attend his duties as a Lay Pastor. His services shall be terminated by a unanimous vote of the Pastor and remaining Lay Pastors.
4. The first two (3) Lay Pastors shall be appointed by the Pastor. Additional Lay Pastors shall be appointed by the unanimous agreement of the Pastor and existing Lay Pastors. A Lay Pastor shall serve until such a time as he chooses to resign of his own will or until he is asked to resign because the qualifications of a Lay Pastor are not being fulfilled.

Section 5: Additional Responsibility:

The Pastoral Leadership Team (Board of Directors) is responsible to perform required legal and business transactions of the Church. They are strictly limited to performing such legal and business transactions as required by law in order to maintain the incorporated status of the Church. The authority of the Pastoral Leadership Team is limited as stated herein unless: (1) specifically granted otherwise in these Bylaws; or (2) otherwise specifically directed by a majority vote of the Church members.

Incorporation Functions: For the purposes of incorporation and state legal requirements of corporate governance, the following positions fulfill the necessary corporate positions. However, this does not enlarge any duties of these positions or create any duties that would be inconsistent with those duties and limitations set forth in these bylaws.

- Pastoral Leadership Team fills role of board of directors
- Chairman of Deacons fills role of board chairman.

- Senior Pastor fills role of president.
- Secretary of Deacons fills role of corporate secretary.

The Pastoral Leadership Team, in addition to fulfilling necessary incorporation functions, serves to coordinate the administrative functions the church in a unified manner and to facilitate the administration of the church. This team shall meet as necessary and report to the church membership.

SECTION 1: COMPOSITION

The Pastoral Leadership Team shall consist of the Senior Pastor, Staff Pastors and Lay Pastors from within the church.

The Chairpersons of other ministry teams/committees and organizations shall participate in meetings as non-voting invitees whenever projects or programs in which their team/committee may be involved are to be considered.

The team may delegate some of its authorities and duties to individual pastors, staff, members, Deacons, ministry teams and others as long as the delegation does not breach its fiduciary duties to the Church.

ARTICLE VI: FINANCIAL POLICIES

Scripture teaches in I Corinthians 16 that Christians should willfully and joyfully set aside as the Lord has prospered them, an offering, to give as an act of worship in response to God's provision in their life. While the tithe is a good place to start, giving is, as unto the Lord, in obedience to the leading of the Spirit.

We know that faith in God plays a predominant role in all decisions regarding church finances, it is also important to ensure integrity and discipline in all things. This article serves as a practical framework for proper and appropriate stewardship of the Lord's money.

SECTION 1: BUDGET AND AUDIT

- 1) The Finance Team, in consultation with the Senior Pastor and Ministerial Staff, shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by line item the amount needed and sought for all local and worldwide expenses.
- 2) A system of accounting that will adequately provide for the handling of all funds shall be the responsibility of the Finance Team.
- 3) The Financial Secretary will properly record all receipts in the accounting system.
- 4) The fiscal year of the Church shall begin on the first day of January in each calendar year and end on December 31.

- 5) The Finance Team shall conduct or arrange for an annual review or audit of a type and nature they deem appropriate, provided that every five years the church shall employ the services of an outside auditor to conduct a review or audit.
- 6) General Fund surplus (amounts received over the budget needs) will be reported to the church as surpluses.
- 7) During times of church indebtedness, the Finance Team may authorize the church treasurer to appropriate surplus monies toward debt retirement. Reports will be made to the church when such an action takes place.

SECTION 2: DESIGNATED FUNDS

The church may accept any designated contribution, grant, bequest, or devise consistent with its general tax-exempt purposes as specified in the Articles of Incorporation. As so limited, donors' designated contributions will be accepted for special funds, purposes, or uses as approved by the Pastoral Leadership Team in unity with the Deacons and such designations generally will be honored.

However, the church shall reserve all rights, title, and interest in and to and control of such contributions, as well as full discretion as to the ultimate expenditure or distribution thereof in connection with any funds (including designated contributions), to assure that such funds will be used to carry out the church's tax exempt purposes.

All requests for contributions outside the general fund shall clearly identify the purpose and programs to which donations will be applied. The Church will ensure that donations are used for the purposes for which they were raised. All contributions designated for specific projects shall be applied to those projects. Whenever the Church receives more contributions for a given project than can be wisely applied to that project, the Church shall use any such funds to meet a similar pressing need. The Church's policy shall be to meet the needs God lays before it, so that Christ is lifted up and the Gospel advanced.

SECTION 3: DEPOSITS

The Pastoral Leadership along with the Board of Deacons shall select banks, trust companies, or other depositories in which all funds of the church not otherwise employed shall, from time to time, be deposited to the credit of the church.

SECTION 4: CHECKS

All checks or demands for money and notes of the church shall be signed by the officer, officers, or other persons as the Pastoral Leadership Team and Board of Deacons may from time to time designate. All checks shall require two authorized signatures from two disinterested and unrelated members.

SECTION 5: CONTRACTS

The President and Chairman may sign contracts to bind the church once approved by the Pastoral Leadership Team or according to its procedures. However, the Pastoral Leadership Team may also authorize any other officer or officers, agent or agents of the church in addition to these two officers so authorized by these Bylaws, to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the church including real estate transactions once approval of the members has been sought and obtained. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances. All contracts for major services or expenditures should be reviewed by a competent attorney.

SECTION 6: ENDOWMENTS

The Pastoral Leadership Team may establish on behalf of the church any endowments for the general purposes or for any special purpose of the church.

SECTION 7: FINANCIAL RECORDS

Records, documents, etc. (paper and electronic) shall be considered property of Southside Baptist Church and will be kept within appropriate confidences. Such records shall be housed and secured at the church whenever possible.

SECTION 8: BENEVOLENT TEAM

The Benevolent Team shall consist of at least three (3) members, one of whom shall be the First Vice Chairman of the Deacon Team, and shall establish procedures to disburse by check all funds allocated to them. It shall be the duty of the Team to determine needs of the members or others in the community as they arise. The Team shall examine the need of the recipients of these designated funds under an approved Benevolence Policy. They shall also receive and distribute clothes, food, household furnishings, and other items, as they deem necessary.

SECTION 9: PARTNERSHIPS, JOINT VENTURES, LLCs AND AUXILIARY CORPORATIONS

The Pastoral Leadership Team may authorize any officer(s) or agent(s) of the church to enter into any partnerships or joint ventures or create auxiliary corporations or limited liability companies that the Pastoral Leadership Team determines will advance the religious purposes and goals of the church as described herein provided that such action would not violate the church's tax-exempt status.

Section 10: PURCHASE OR SALE OF PROPERTY AND BORROWING

No officer or agent of the church may purchase or sell real property or personal property valued in excess of \$1,500 per single item on behalf of the church without prior authorization from the Pastoral Leadership Team . Any sale or purchase of real estate on behalf of the church shall be

authorized by the members in accordance with these Bylaws. Any borrowing of money must be approved by the Pastoral Leadership Team and a majority of the members.

Section 11: GRACE GIVING/OFFERINGS

- 1) The Counting Team shall receive, count, and deposit all monetary contributions in accordance with procedures in the Church Ministry Guidelines.
- 2) The church may seek special offerings after recommendations by the Finance Team, Deacon Team, Senior Pastor, or Ministerial Staff. This section does not preclude individuals from making special offerings for designated causes as they may be led to do by the Holy Spirit.
- 3) Any designated or memorial funds received by the church shall be expended for the designated purpose provided it does not conflict with the church's religious and tax-exempt purposes. If, however, a preference is not indicated, the money will be placed in the church's Building Fund.

ARTICLE VII: BIBLICAL SETTLEMENTS OF DISPUTES WITHIN AND AGAINST THE CHURCH

In any dispute arising between or among church members, pastors, or staff, the dispute may be resolved by the Pastoral Leadership Team and Deacon Team. (or a duly appointed team. from the Pastoral Leadership Team) under the Christian Conciliation Rules and Procedures published at www.peacemaker.net.

ARTICLE VIII: CHURCH MINISTRY GUIDELINES

SECTION 1: DEVELOPMENT OF CHURCH MINISTRY GUIDELINES

The development of a church policy and operation manual ("Church Ministry Guidelines" or "Manual") shall be overseen by the Pastoral Leadership Team or their designees with professional consultation and review. The manual shall include all church policies, procedures, job descriptions, and organization charts depicting lines of responsibility in the administration of the Church. The Manual shall be kept in the church office, and made available to any member upon request. The Manual shall be maintained by the Church Secretary and reviewed biannually by the Pastoral Leadership Team or their designated group. Any member or church ministry may initiate changes in policies and procedures. Addition to, revision of, or deletion from the Manual requires the following:

- 1) The member or Ministry Team requesting change to church policy shall prepare a written draft of the proposed change.

- 2) The written draft of the proposed change shall be submitted to the member of the Ministerial staff to whose area of assignment the policy relates.
- 3) The Ministerial Staff member working with the member of church Ministry Team submitting the proposed change and the affected Ministry Team will review and edit the proposal.
- 4) The proposal will be finalized and approved by the Pastoral Leadership Team .

SECTION 2: COMPILATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE MANUAL

The Pastoral Leadership Team and any of its designees shall be responsible for compiling and maintaining a policies and procedures manual for the day-to-day administrative functions of the Church not covered in the Constitution & Bylaws. Subjects covered may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1) Personnel policies and procedures not covered in the Bylaws;
- 2) Church property policies and procedures;
- 3) Child protection policies and procedures; and
- 4) Other policies and procedures as needed.

These policies and procedures manuals shall be available at the Church office for members to review. Any suggested changes shall be recommended to and approved by the Pastoral Leadership Team .

ARTICLE IX: BIBLICAL COUNSELING

All Christians struggle with sin and the effect it has on our lives and our relationships (see Rom. 3:23; 7:7-25). Whenever a Christian is unable to overcome sinful attitudes or behaviors through private efforts, Biblical wisdom would direct them to seek assistance from other members, and especially from the pastor and ministry directors, who have the responsibility of providing pastoral counseling and oversight (see Rom. 15:14; Gal. 6: 1-2; Col. 3:16; 2 Tim. 3:16-4:2; Heb. 10:24-25; 13:17; James 5:16). Therefore, Southside encourages its members to acknowledge their struggles and seek counsel from each other and especially from our pastor counselors.

We believe that the Bible provides thorough guidance and instruction for faith and life. Therefore, our counseling shall be based on Scriptural principles rather than those of secular psychology or psychiatry. Neither the pastoral nor the lay counselors of this church are trained or licensed as psychotherapists or mental health professionals, nor should they be expected to follow the methods of such specialists.

Although some members of the church work in professional fields outside the church, when serving as pastoral or lay counselors within the church they do not provide the same kind of professional advice and services that they do when they are hired in their professional capacities. Therefore, members who have significant legal, financial, medical or other technical questions should seek advice from

independent professionals. Our pastoral and lay counselors shall be available to cooperate with such advisors and help members to consider their advice in the light of relevant scriptural principles.

ARTICLE X: CONFIDENTIALITY

The Bible teaches that Christians should carefully guard any personal and private information that others reveal to them. Protecting confidences is a sign of Christian love and respect (see Matt. 7:12). It also discourages harmful gossip (Prov. 16:28; 26:20), invites confession (see Prov. 11:13; 28:13; James 5:16), and encourages people to seek needed counseling (see Prov. 10:19; Rom. 15:14). Since these goals are essential to the ministry of the gospel and the work of this church, all members are expected to refrain from gossip and to respect the confidences of others. In particular, our pastors and ministry directors shall carefully protect all information that they receive through pastoral counseling, subject to the following guidelines.

Although confidentiality is to be respected as much as possible, there are times when it is appropriate to reveal certain information to others. In particular, when the pastors and ministry directors of this church believe it is biblically necessary, they may disclose confidential information to appropriate people in the following circumstances:

1. When a pastor or ministry director is uncertain of how to counsel a person about a particular problem and needs to seek advice from other pastors or ministry directors in this church or, if the person attends another church, from the pastors or ministry directors of that church (see Prov. 11:14; 13:10; 15:22; 19:20; 20:18; Matt. 18:15-17);
2. When the person who disclosed the information or any other person is in imminent danger of serious harm unless others intervene (see Prov. 24:11-12);
3. When a person refuses to repent of sin and it becomes necessary to institute disciplinary proceedings (see Matt. 18:15-20 and the Statement of Church Discipline in these Bylaws) or seek the assistance of individuals or agencies outside this church (see, e.g., Rom. 13:1-5); or
4. When required by law to report suspected child abuse.

Scripture commands that confidential information is to be shared with others only when a problem cannot be resolved through the efforts of a small group of people within the church (Matt. 18:15-17). Therefore, except as provided herein, a pastor or ministry director may not disclose confidential information to anyone outside the church without the approval of the Pastoral Leadership Team or the consent of the person who originally disclosed the information. The Pastoral Leadership Team may approve such disclosure only when it finds that all internal efforts to resolve a problem have been exhausted (see, e.g., 1 Cor. 6:1-8) and the problem can be satisfactorily resolved without the assistance of individuals or agencies outside this church (see, e.g. Rom. 13:1-5). The limitation shall apply to but is not limited to the giving of testimony in a court of law and the reporting of abuse.

The pastors and ministry directors may, but need not, provide counselees with written notice of these confidentiality provisions, but these provisions shall be in effect, regardless of whether such notice is given.

ARTICLE XI: AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

These Bylaws shall be approved by the Pastoral Leadership Team/Deacon Team and then may be amended by two thirds (3/4) vote of the voting members present at a Regular and/or Called Members' Meeting provided the amendment is placed in writing and announced from the pulpit fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting.

[illegible]

I, the undersigned Clerk of Southside Baptist Church of Suffolk, do hereby certify that the above Constitution & Bylaws were adopted on _____ by the Members at a duly called meeting and that this Constitution & Bylaws are current and in operation as of that date.

Clerk

Date _____