

Bethany Church Constitution and Bylaws 2018 Amendments

1. First Amendment

Under “**Section 2. Candidacy**” amendment should be **changed from:**

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

- (1) By profession of faith and for baptism according to the policies of this church.*
- (2) By promise of a letter of recommendation from another Baptist Church.*
- (3) By restoration upon a statement of prior conversion experience and baptism in a Baptist Church when no letter is obtainable.*
- (4) By statement of prior conversion experience and baptism from a church doctrinally compatible with Southern Baptists’ view of baptism.*

Membership is reserved for those who have been baptized by immersion as believers.”

Change to:

All such candidates shall be presented to the church for membership in any of the following ways:

1. By profession of faith and for baptism by immersion according to God’s Word.
2. By scriptural baptism upon prior profession of faith.
3. By promise of a letter of recommendation from another Baptist church.
4. By statement having been previously baptized in another denomination practicing believer’s baptism by immersion.

Membership will be granted to anyone who offers a biblical testimony of salvation, has been scripturally baptized, and agrees to accept the responsibilities of membership. Once accepted, the name of the new member shall be added to the Bethany Church roll and publicized to the membership. If no clear evidence of salvation is found, the applicant cannot be accepted into the membership. However, Bethany Church will diligently offer Christian love, prayer, and scripture, making every attempt to lead the individual to Christ and then church membership. (John 3:16; Romans 1:16-17; 10:9-10; Ephesians 2:8-9; James 2:14-26)

Under “**Section 2. Candidacy**” amendment should **add:**

“The membership of this church shall be composed of individuals who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and affirm the tenets of the Church Constitution and who offer evidence, by their confession and their conduct, that they are living in accord with their affirmations and this Constitution and Bylaws, and are actively pursuing and continuing in a vital fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. The Pastor, elders, and deacons of this Church shall have final authority in all matters of church governance, as set forth and described in the Bylaws.”

Those applying for church membership must agree to and sign an affirmation statement stating that they agree to the following: “We believe that to carry on the religious mission of the church, to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons who associate with the church as members should abide by and agree to the following statements and conduct themselves in accordance with them.”

2. Second Amendment

Under **'IX. Doctrinal Statement'** amendment should be **changed from:**

The doctrinal statement of this church shall be consistent with the articles states in the booklet "The Baptist Faith and Message" adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention, May 9, 1963.

Amendment should be **moved to and below:**

Section 2. Candidacy"

"The membership of this church shall be composed of individuals who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and affirm the tenets of the Church Constitution and who offer evidence, by their confession and their conduct, that they are living in accord with their affirmations and this Constitution and Bylaws, and are actively pursuing and continuing in a vital fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. The Pastor, Elders, and deacons of this Church shall have final authority in all matters of church governance, as set forth and described in the Bylaws."

*Those applying for church membership must agree to and sign an affirmation statement stating that they agree to the following: "We believe that to carry on the religious mission of the church, to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons who associate with the church as members **should abide by and agree to the following statements and conduct themselves in accordance with them."***

Amendment should be **changed to:**

A. Doctrinal Statement

God: There is one God. He is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He eternally exists in three persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and one. God is perfect in His attributes of holiness, love, mercy, power and knowledge.

Jesus Christ: *Jesus Christ is God's Son. He is co-equal with God the Father. He was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, died on the cross as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world, rose again after three days, ascended to Heaven and will return again someday to earth to reign as Kind of Kings and Lord of Lords.*

The Holy Spirit: *The Holy Spirit is co-equal with God the Father and the Son, Jesus Christ. He is the Divine helper, instructor, Guide and Counselor.*

He lives in every believer from the moment of salvation providing power for living, guidance and understanding of spiritual truth. He exalts Christ and convicts man of sin and righteousness and judgement. He enlightens and empowers the believer.

The Bible: *The Bible is God's written revelation of Himself to man. It was written by human authors under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Bible is the sole source of truth, is inerrant and is divinely inspired by God.*

Salvation: *Salvation is a gift from God to men. Man is sinful, therefore cannot earn or deserve eternal life. Sin has separated us from God and made us unacceptable to Him. God sent Jesus, who was sinless, to die on the cross and pay the penalty for our sin. Salvation is free to all who trust in Jesus Christ as the perfect for the sins of the world. Faith in Jesus is the only way we can have eternal life.*

Eternal Security: *Because salvation is based on the person and work of Christ and is not based on man's works, the believer is secure throughout eternity. Salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not by the self-sufficiency of the believer.*

Baptism: *Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water, giving public testimony of his faith in Christ. It is a physical act symbolizing the spiritual salvation of the believer and as such has no saving quality of its own. Baptism is the outward, visible testimony of salvation.*

Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality: *We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male and female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Gen.1:26-27.) Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person. We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen.2:18-25.) We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (I Cor.6:18; 7:2-5; Heb.13:4.) We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matt.15:18-20; I Cor.6:9-10.)*

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Bethany Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the [organization] members and the community, it is imperative that all person employed by Bethany Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Matt.5:16; Phil.2:14-16; I Thess.5:22.) We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Rom.10:9-10; I Cor.6:9-11.) We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31.) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Bethany Church.

Life: *"We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other state or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life." (Ps.139.)*

Final Authority on Matters of Faith and Conduct: *"The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Bethany Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Pastor, elders and deacons are Bethany Church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application."*

3. Third Amendment

Under "Section 3. New Member Orientation" amendment should be changed from:
"New members of this church are expected to participate in the church's new member orientation."

Amendment should read: “New members of this church are added to this church body by church vote and although a new member’s class, along with individual discipleship is provided it is not required for membership.

4. Fourth Amendment

Under **‘1. Church Membership, Section 6. Discipline’**

Section 6. Discipline

It shall be the practice of this church to emphasize to it’s members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The pastor, other members of the church staff, and deacons are available for counsel and guidance. The attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption rather than punishment.

Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, the pastor and the deacons will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accordance with Matthew 18 and other relate Scripture. If it becomes necessary for the church to take action to exclude a member, a two-thirds vote of the members present is required; and the church may proceed to declare the person to be no longer in the membership of the church. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance.

The church may restore to membership any person previously excluded, upon request of the excluded person, and by vote of the church upon evidence of the excluded person’s repentance and reformation.

Amendment should read:

A. Statement on Church Discipline Add: *The threefold purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining purity in the local church (1 Cor.5:6), to edify believers by deterring sin and promoting purity (1 Tim. 5:20), and to promote the spiritual welfare of the offending believer by calling him or her to return to a biblical standard of doctrine and conduct (Gal. 6:1). The Lord Jesus Christ has entrusted the local church with the authority and responsibility to discipline members for flagrant sin or serious doctrinal error, with the goal of the restoration of the offender. This discipline is entrusted to the Pastoral Staff and deacons and is to follow the biblical pattern as set forth in Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5; 2 Cor. 2:7-8; Gal. 6:1; 2 Thess. 3:6; Titus 3:10-11; and 2 John 7-11. Any member of this church who practice or affirms a doctrine or conduct that, in the judgment of the Pastoral Staff, elders and deacons, is opposed to the teaching of the Word of God, or is threatening to the testimony of this church, or is divisive to the body, shall be subject to church discipline. Discipline will follow the said biblical pattern, and is an effort to bring the individual to repentance and protect the church from unrepentant sin. Discipline may involve exclusion from participation in ministry and communion, as well as dismissal from the fellowship of this church. An individual may be disciplined by the Pastoral Staff, elders and deacons short of dismissal from the fellowship, as they deem appropriate for the specific circumstances (for example, an individual may remain in certain circumstances a member of this church but be denied the privilege of serving in a particular ministry.) The Pastoral Staff and deacons, as is required by Scripture, may report to the congregation the names of those who have lost membership by reason of church discipline, and the reason for that discipline, as described in Matt. 18:15-20.*

Add to the amended statement:

It shall be the practice of this church to emphasize to it's members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The pastor, other members of the church staff, and deacons are available for counsel and guidance. The attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption rather than punishment.

Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, the pastor and the deacons will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accordance with Matthew 18 and other relate Scripture. If it becomes necessary for the church to take action to exclude a member, a two-thirds vote of the members present is required; and the church may proceed to declare the person to be no longer in the membership of the church. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance.

The church may restore to membership any person previously excluded, upon request of the excluded person, and by vote of the church upon evidence of the excluded person's repentance and reformation.

5. Fifth Amendment

Add to '1. Church Membership, Section 6. Discipline'

B. Statement on Mediation: *Members of the church agree to submit any legal dispute with the church for mediation before a mutually agreed-upon mediator, or if none can be agreed upon, one selected by Peacemaker Ministries. Lawsuits between believers, or threats between believers, are a matter of grave concern for the church, are contrary to biblical and church teaching, and mediation is an effort to resolve disputes in a biblical fashion. (I Cor. 6:1-7.) Mediation will be governed by the Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation of the Institute for Christian Conciliation (ICC Rules), unless modified as stipulated by the parties. In particular, subject to the more detailed provisions of the ICC Rules, mediator(s) will attempt to assist us in reaching a voluntary settlement of any disputes through mediation. The confidentiality of the mediation process will be protected and these matters will not be discussed with people who do not have a necessary interest in them. If settlement can be agreed upon, the conciliators may, at their discretion, issue an advisory opinion. Neither the opinion, nor any communications exchanged in the mediation process, will be admissible for any purpose in any subsequent legal proceeding.*

6. Sixth Amendment

Add to Section 2. Candidacy, A. Doctrinal Statement

B. MARRIAGE POLICY

Because God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man, a woman, and Himself, Bethany Church will only recognize marriages between a biological man and a biological woman. Further, the Pastor and staff of Bethany Church shall only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman. Finally, the facilities and property of Bethany Church shall only host weddings between one man and one woman.

7. Seventh Amendment

After "XII. Incorporation" add:

XIII. CHURCH FACILITY USE POLICY

The Church's facilities were provided through God's benevolence and by the sacrificial generosity of Church members. The Church desires that its facilities be used for the fellowship of the Body of Christ and to bring God glory. Although the facilities are generally open to the public, we make our facilities open to approved non-members as a witness to our faith, in a spirit of Christian charity, and as a means of demonstrating the Gospel of Jesus Christ in practice. But facility use will not be permitted to persons or groups holding, advancing, or advocating beliefs or practices that conflict with the Church's faith or moral teachings, which are summarized in, among other places, the Church's Constitution and Bylaws. Nor may Church facilities be used for activities that contradict, or are deemed inconsistent with, the Church's faith or moral teachings. The Pastor or his official designee is the final decision maker concerning use of Church facilities. This restricted facility use policy is necessary for two important reasons. **First**, the Church may not in good conscience materially cooperate in activities or beliefs that are contrary to its faith. Allowing its facilities to be used for purposes that contradict the Church's beliefs would be material cooperation with that activity, and would be a grave violation of the Church's faith and religious practice. (2 Cor. 6:14; 1 Thess. 5:22) **Second**, it is very important that the church present a consistent message to the community, and that the church staff and members conscientiously maintain that message as part of their witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Allowing facilities to be used by groups or persons who express beliefs or engage in practices contrary to the Church's faith would have a severe, negative impact on the message that the Church strives to promote. It could also cause confusion and scandal to Church members and the community because they may reasonably perceive that by allowing use of our facilities, the church agrees with the beliefs or practices of the persons or groups using its facilities. Therefore, in no event shall persons or groups who hold advance, or advocate beliefs, or advance, advocate, or engage in practices that contradict the Church's faith use any Church facility. Nor may Church facilities be used in any way that contradicts the Church's faith. This policy applies to all Church facilities, regardless of whether the facilities are connect to the Church's sanctuary, because the Church sees all of its property as holy and set apart to worship God. (Cor. 3:17.)

Approved Users and Priority of Use

The Pastor or official designee must approve all uses of Church facilities. Generally, priority shall be given to Church members, their immediate families, and organized groups that are part of the ministry, organization, or sponsored activities of the church. Church facilities and equipment will be made available to non-members or outside groups meeting the following qualifications:

- 1.) Groups or person requesting facility use must affirm that their beliefs and practices and planned uses of the facilities are consistent with the Church's faith and practice.
- 2.) The group or person seeking facility use must submit a signed "Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement" form.
- 3.) The group or person seeking facility use must be willing to take responsibility for the facilities and equipment used and must agree to abide by the Church's rules of conduct for facility use, as stated below and as described in any additional instructions by Church staff.

Facility Use Hours

Facilities are available between the hours of 8 am and 10 pm. Use outside these hours may be approved by the Pastor or official designee.

Scheduling Events

Facility use requests shall be made to the Pastor, staff, secretary, or events coordinator by submitting the “Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement” form. The event will be reserved and placed on the Church calendar when the Pastor or official designee approves the use.

Fees

Use of the Church facilities is subject to a use and maintenance fee of to pay for the upkeep of Church facilities. Church members are not required to pay a fee for usage because maintenance of the facilities is derived from member tithes and offerings.

Facilities Use Guidelines

1. Any person or group must sign the “Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement” form prior to reservation of Church facilities.
2. Alcohol Policy: No alcohol may be served on Church premises. Alcohol use is strictly prohibited on Church premises. Premises are defined as building, grounds and parking lot.
3. Smoking Policy: [smoking in any indoor Church facility is prohibited.]
4. Groups are restricted to only those areas of the facility that the group has reserved.
5. Food and beverages in classrooms, worship space...[are not allowed without a lid, and restricted to certain areas, etc.]
6. Church equipment, such as tables and chairs, must be returned to original placement, unless arranged otherwise prior to the event.
7. All lights much be turned off and doors locked upon departure.
8. Clean-up: It is the responsibility of the group to clean up after their event.
9. Abusive or foul language, violent behavior, and drug or alcohol abuse are strictly prohibited on Church premises. Any person exhibiting such behavior will be required to leave the premises.

Insurance

For all non-church-sponsored events, the group or person using the facilities must obtain liability insurance coverage in the amount of at least a million dollars. The user must also sign a “Facility Use and an Indemnity and Hold Harmless Agreement.”

Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement

Name of person or organization requesting use of facilities

Please state whether you are a:

- Church Member Church-Sponsored Ministry Non-Member Non-Member Group

Contact Information:

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

If the requested use is by an organization not affiliated with the church, please briefly state the organization's purpose and mission:

Please list the organizations website, if any: _____

Please list the names of the organization's office-holders and leaders: _____

Regardless of type of user, please describe which church facilities you are requesting use of and the purpose for which you intend to use the facilities:

What date(s) and time(s) are you requesting to use the facilities?

If you are requesting use of the Church's facilities for a wedding and/or wedding reception, please list the names and contact information of the bride and groom:

Bride: _____

Groom: _____

Please describe the marriage preparation counseling or training undertaken by the bride and groom: _____

I affirm that:

1. I understand that the church does not allow its facilities to be used in a way that contradicts its faith or by person or groups holding beliefs that contradict the church's faith.

2. To the best of my knowledge the purpose for which I am requesting use of church facilities will not contradict the church's faith, and I commit to promptly disclose any potential conflict of which I am aware or become aware to church staff.

3. I am not aware of any beliefs that are professed by me or the organization I represent and which is requesting use of the church's facilities that contradict the beliefs of the church. I agree to promptly disclose any potential conflicts in belief to church staff.

4. I understand that upon approval of my facilities use request, I will need to provide a security deposit in the amount of \$_____ and a certificate of insurance for at least \$_____ of coverage, and any other fees required by the church.

5. I understand that the church does not allow its facilities to be generally available to the public, and that my use of these facilities is subject to the elder's approval, which is conditioned in part on my agreement to the requirements in the "Church Facility Use Policy," a copy of which I have read and understood.

6. I understand that I will be responsible for any damages to the church facilities resulting from this proposed use of facilities.

7. The church believes disputes are to be worked out between parties without recourse to the courts. See, generally, Matthew Chapter 18:1 and 1 Corinthians 6. Accordingly, users of the facility agree to attempt resolution of any disputes through Christian mediation.

**BETHANY CHURCH
FACILITY USE REQUEST FORM**

Member or regular attender of Bethany Church who will be present:

- I have access to the building (key)
- I will need access to the building

*Facilities needed (please circle all rooms you plan to use):

- Youth Room
- Classroom(s) How many? _____
- Worship Center
- Bethany Academy
- Outside Lawn

*Equipment needed:

- TV/DVD
- CD Player
- PowerPoint
- Sound System
- Kitchen Supplies

Use Guidelines: Signature of this form indicates acceptance of all applicable fees and guidelines: _____

Estimated number of people involved: _____

The person requesting the use of Church Facilities agrees to be responsible for any property damage that results during the use of the facilities. Please report any damage to the church office promptly.

The group or individual using the facility is responsible for set up, clean up, and return to normal set up of the facility. (See **“Bethany Church Facility Use Policy”** for **guidelines**).

Signature of Responsible Party

Date

For office use only:

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

CC: __ (Custodian) __ (Office) __ (Ministry Coordinator) __ (Other)

SPECIAL ROOM SET UP INSTRUCTIONS
(INCLUDE DRAWING OF LAYOUT)

For Office Use Only

Date request made: _____

Date request approved: _____

Deposit received: _____

Fee Paid: _____

Special Instructions:

CHURCH FACILITY USAGE AND HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT

I/We the undersigned authorized representative(s) of _____ (hereafter the "Organization") of the city of _____, state of _____ shall be using the building and grounds of _____

_____ (hereafter the "Church") from _____ to _____, 20____, for the purpose of _____

_____ hereafter referred to as the "Activity".

I/We understand and agree that neither the Church, nor its trustees, representatives, employees and agents may be held liable in any way for any occurrence in connection with the Activity which may result in injury, harm, or other damages to the undersigned or members of our Organization and guests invited or not. Rather, I/We agree that our Organization alone shall be responsible for any property damage, personal injury or death that may occur during our use of the premises.

As part of the consideration for being allowed to use your facility, building and grounds as well as all appliances and fixtures in the activity, I/we release the Church, its trustees, employees, agents, or representative from any claim for damages, injury or death which may occur while participating in the Activity. I/We further agree to save and hold harmless the Church, its trustees, employees, agents or representatives from any claim arising out of or participation in any form or fashion in the Activity.

I/We represent that our Organization has general liability insurance with coverage limits of _____ in affect as of the date of the Activity. I/We agree to name the Church as an additional insured on our general liability insurance policy and

shall provide proof of such additional insurance coverage to the Church prior to the date of Activity.

I/We further state that I/We are authorized to sign this agreement, that I/We understand the terms herein are contractual and not mere recital; and that I/We have signed this document of My/Our own free act and volition. I/We further state and acknowledge that I/We have fully informed ourselves of the content of this affirmation and release by reading it before I/We signed it.

We have executed this Church Usage and Hold Harmless Agreement this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

_____(ORGANIZATION NAME)

By:

Signature _____

Title: _____

8. Eighth Amendment

After XIII. CHURCH FACILITY USE POLICY add:

XIV. RELIGIOUS EMPLOYMENT POLICY

Work Practices and Performance Standards

Employment is with the mutual consent of you and Bethany Church. Consequently, both you and Bethany Church have the right to terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause or advance notice. As a standard ethical practice, employees are expected to provide a minimum of a two week notice if they plan to vacate their position. It is not possible to provide a complete list of every work rule or performance standard. As a result, the following are presented only as examples. You are responsible for understanding and following these practices and standards. Employees who do not comply may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination.

Job Performance

If it becomes evident that an employee is not serving in a Christian manner, it may be necessary to discipline, up to and including possible termination, for poor job performance, as determined by Bethany Church. Some examples of poor job performance are as follows:

- Below average work quality and quantity.
- Poor attitude, including rudeness, or lack of cooperation.
- Excessive absenteeism, tardiness, or abuse of privileges.
- Failure to follow instructions or Bethany Church’s policies and procedures.

Misconduct

Employees may also be disciplined, up to and including possible termination, for conduct no becoming a Christian, such as: 1. Insubordination 2. Violating God’s laws that affect how others see you biblically, spiritually, and ethically. 3. Abuse, misuse, theft, or the unauthorized

possession or removal of the Church property, ministry funds, or the personal property of others. 4. Falsifying or making a material omission on the Church records, reports, or documents, such as payroll, personnel, and employment records. 5. Divulging confidential Church information to unauthorized persons. 6. Disorderly conduct on the Church property, including fighting or attempted bodily injury, or the use of profane, abusive, or threatening language toward others. 7. Violation of any law adversely affecting the Church or conviction in court of any crime that may cause the employee to be regarded as unsuitable for continued employment. 8. Violation of the Church policy on alcohol, drugs, controlled substances or harassment.

Policy Against Harassment

The church is committed to providing a work environment that is free of discrimination. In keeping with this commitment, the Church maintains a strict policy prohibiting unlawful harassment, including sexual harassment. It is important for you to understand that jokes, stories, cartoons, nicknames, and comments about appearance may be offensive to others. Sexual harassment of employees by supervisors, co-workers, or vendors is prohibited. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. If you believe that you are being, or have been harassed in any way please report the facts of the incident or incidents to your Supervisor or Church Administration immediately, without fear of reprisal. If the harassment involves your Supervisor notify the Executive Pastor or church Administrator.

Drug and Alcohol-Free Workplace

The use, sale, transfer, possession, or being “under the influence” of alcohol, illegal drugs, or controlled substances when on duty, on church property, or while operating church vehicles is prohibited. In addition, off duty conduct which may adversely affect the reputation or interest of the Church in its sole discretion is prohibited. “Under the influence” for the purpose of this policy, is defined as being unable to perform work in a safe or productive manner, and/or being in a physical or mental condition which creates a risk to the safety and well-being of the affected employee, other co-workers, the public, or church property as determined by that person’s Supervisor. All employees may be subject to drug testing at any time. Employees using prescription drugs must notify their Supervisor if the medication may affect their behavior or performance. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Conflict of Interest

All employees of Bethany Church shall avoid all real or apparent conflicts of interest and any activity that might have an adverse effect on the Church. Full-time employees are prohibited from engaging in outside employment without the prior written approval of the Senior Pastor. In addition, all employees are prohibited from engaging in outside employment, private business, or other activity, which might have an adverse effect on, or create a conflict of interest with, the Church, at its sole discretion.

Personal Demeanor

All personnel at Bethany Church, whether volunteer, part-time, or full-time, must recognize the leadership example that much be required of them. While no specific dress code is required, individuals should dress cleanly and appropriately for the task they are accomplishing. Beyond the external aspects of the individual’s demeanor, the staff member should be positive in attitude and Christian in service. Staff personnel are in the people business. The client is the member or non-member that each will encounter daily, both in the Church and in the community.

Staff members of Bethany Church are expected to set the example of Christian ministry and lifestyle.

Public Relations

The Pastor or his designee will be the spokesperson for the Church in all matters of publicity or official comment. No employee will originate or release any news which is concerned with the policies, doctrines, procedures, convictions, finances, or activities of the Church for use in newspapers, social media, radio, television or any other medium of communication. All such inquiries will be referred to the Church Administration. Any publicity release must come from the Church Administration and under signature.

Confidence

Matters relating to members and non-members private and personal lives should not be made a matter of public discussion or disclosure; nor should the general operations of the church office, financial office, or records office be discussed outside the working environment of that office. All staff members, paid and volunteer, full-time and part-time are expected to use the utmost tact and discretion in carrying out the functions of their position. Queries by individuals concerning operations of the church, its finances, or members should be directed to the Pastor.

Attendance and Punctuality

It is important that employees work their assigned schedules consistently. However, the Church understands that because of illness or emergency you may be unable to work. Employees who are unable to report for work for any reason must contact their Supervisor by phone prior to the beginning of their regular work day. It is your responsibility to keep your Supervisor informed on a daily basis during a short-term absence and to provide medical verification when asked to do so. In general, all employees with set schedules are expected to be responsible and demonstrate respect for fellow employees by establishing a record of punctuality and regular attendance. If an employee finds that he/she will be late for more than ten (10) minutes, the employee should notify their Supervisor as soon as possible. An employee's failure to arrive consistently at his/her regularly scheduled starting time and leave at his/her regularly scheduled quitting time is considered cause for corrective action. Excessive absence or tardiness are factors considered in evaluating overall job performance.

9. Ninth Amendment

Under **"I. Church Officers and Committees, Section 1. Officers"** add to the following statement:

"Additional officers of the church shall be the Pastor, the church staff, the deacons, and a moderator."

Change to: *"Additional officers of the church shall be the Pastor, church staff, Elders, deacons, and moderator."*

add to the following statement: (3) *The church shall elect trustees and/or deacons at regular or special business meetings of the church called specifically for such purpose.*

Change to: (3) *The church shall elect trustees and/or deacons at regular or special business meetings of the church called specifically for such purpose.*

A. ELDERS RESPONSIBILITIES

1. According to the New Testament concept of eldership, elders lead the church, teach and preach the Word, protect the church from false teachers, exhort and admonish the saints in sound doctrine, visit the sick, pray, and judge doctrinal issues. This will be an elder's primary work at Bethany Church. As described for us in the New Testament, their overall responsibilities are as follows:

1. General oversight of the church - Acts 20:28, Hebrews 13:17, I Thessalonians 5:12
 - a. in practical matters - Acts 11:29-30, Acts 6:1-6
 - b. in matters of doctrine - Acts 15, Acts 16:4
 - c. in matters of discipline/character - Hebrews 13:17
2. Shepherding, leading, the people - I Peter 5:2-3, Acts 20:28, Hebrews 13:17, James 5:14
3. Equipping the body of Christ for the work of ministry - Ephesians 4:11-12
4. Teaching the members - I Timothy 3:2, I Timothy 5:17, I Thessalonians 5:12
5. Exhorting in sound doctrine - Titus 1:9
6. Refuting those who contradict sound doctrine - Titus 1:9
7. Living the standard of godliness - I Timothy 3:1, I Peter 5:3

The elders are responsible to lead and shepherd the church body in all decision-making matters. This means that at times the elders will gather the entire congregation for open discussion, proposals, information, and prayer, and/or voting (Acts 6, Acts 15). At other times, decisions will be made solely by the elders (Hebrews 13:17, I Timothy 5:17, I Thessalonians 5:12-13). Church votes (article 3 section 6) will be taken on such matters as the selection of elders, deacons, trustees, affirmation of the annual church budget, the selection of full-time ministry staff, any acquisition or disposition of real estate, and the incurring of any indebtedness.

3. The elders are responsible to oversee and promote a high level of financial accountability through such means as the presentation of the annual budget and monthly financial business reports. All financial records shall be available and open to any member during normal business hours, except individual giving records of other members.

4. At all times, church members (including ministry teams) are responsible to exercise their God-given privilege to communicate their thinking on any issue to the elders for the purpose of together discovering the truth as revealed in God's Word. At all times, the elders are responsible to help promote and develop an educated, involved, and sufficiently informed congregation. In this manner, all members of the church body participate, although not all lead.

5. The pastoral elder is to be regarded as the "first among equals." He shall be responsible for the primary preaching and teaching ministries of the church (1 Tim 5:17, Ephesians 4:11-12), the conducting of all public and regular services, and the general oversight of the church.

QUALIFICATIONS

1. The essential element needed is that of godly character. An elder "must be" a man exhibiting the following characteristics: (I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9).

- (1) Above reproach (blameless)
- (2) Husband of one wife (a one-woman man)
- (3) Temperate (sober, vigilant)
- (4) Prudent (sober-minded, sensible)
- (5) Respectable (orderly, of good behavior)

- (6) Hospitable
- (7) Able to teach (can exhort believers and refute false teaching)
- (8) Not given to wine
- (9) Not pugnacious (non-combative)
- (10) Gentle (moderate, forbearing, patient)
- (11) Uncontentious (not soon angry, not quarrelsome, leaning away from strife)
- (12) Free from the love of money (not covetous, not greedy of gain)
- (13) Manages his own house well (his children are faithful, not accused of rebellion to God)
- (14) Not a new convert
- (15) Has a good reputation with outsiders
- (16) Not self-willed
- (17) A lover of good
- (18) Just (fair)
- (19) Devout (holy)
- (20) Self-controlled

He must be willing to make the necessary time commitments to fulfill his responsibilities as an elder.

NUMBER

The number of elders must be limited by the number of qualified men that the Lord raises up, and the ability of the elders to maintain intimate, deep and growing relationships between its members. It is imperative that the elders model accountability, care, and every other aspect of authentic biblical community. Great care should be taken that the “number” of elders does not threaten the intimacy or the integrity of relationships within the elder body.

CALLING ELDERS

Elders are called by God to provide spiritual leadership to the church. The elders shall determine when the church would be benefited by the ordination of additional elders. This determination may be based on unique gifts and callings recognized within the body, and/or growth of the congregation, or to fill a vacancy. Church members may at any time recommend elder candidates to the elder body per the process described. A prospective elder will be examined as prescribed below to determine:

- His qualifications
- His knowledge of elder qualifications.
- His personal knowledge and comprehension of the Word of God especially as it relates to sound doctrine.
- His personal philosophy concerning the purpose of the local church and his responsibility as a leader within the church;
- His agreement with the Beliefs & Governance of this church, in its entirety;
- His ability and willingness to serve and participate actively as an elder, to attend faithfully the services and programs of the church and to support the various programs and activities of the church
- His ability to teach and his desire to cultivate this ability for the Lord;
- His life of making disciples for Christ; and
- His history of being in biblical community including accountable, caring, submissive, and enduring relationships with other believers.

ELDER SELECTION PROCESS

The selection of a new elder shall, at a minimum, follow the five (5) steps below:

1. Candidate Identification – elder candidates shall be identified and recommended by the congregation. Nominations from Bethany Church members shall be submitted in writing and contain a short narrative describing why the nominee should be considered to serve as an elder. Nominations should be submitted to any member of the elder body. The elder body will prayerfully determine if the nominee fits the biblical qualifications of an elder and he shall be submitted to a period of prayerful consideration by the existing elder body.
2. Notification of the nominee – Following a season of prayer, observing that the nominee meets the criteria as stated in, the elder body shall notify the nominee that he is being considered to hold the office of elder for the church. The nominee shall submit himself to a time of prayer concerning God's call upon his life and his possible service as an elder of the church.
3. Validation – Upon confirmation by the nominee of God's call on his life accompanied by faithful consistent service to Bethany Church, the elders shall begin a validation process which consists of: the candidate's completion of an "Elder Candidate Questionnaire" to determine whether he meets the biblical qualifications of an elder, adequate time to evaluate the candidate is doctrinally sound (Titus 1:9b), affirmation that the candidate is in agreement with the beliefs and governance of this church, and various interviews with third parties concerning the candidate's character, life, service within the body, and Christian witness.
4. Confirmation – Upon satisfactory completion of the validation process, the elder candidate shall be presented to the congregation for comment on his character, qualifications, or any other issue that would affect his suitability to serve as an elder of the church. The church body will be given two weeks to submit comments, questions, or concerns about any candidate to the elder body. The elder body will spend a minimum of two weeks investigating and praying through feedback received. When this period is complete the names of the remaining elder candidates will be submitted to the church body for a vote.
5. Affirmation – Once the elder elect is affirmed by vote of the church body he will enter this affirmation phase of the elder selection process where he will serve for a full year as an elder elect. This year of service as an elder elect will serve as his period of testing (1 Tim. 3:10), as the Bible warns, we're "not to lay hands on anyone to hastily" (1 Tim. 5:22). During this period of testing the elder-elect will meet regularly with the pastor to sharpen his ability to rightly handle God's Word, become familiar with how elders function and operate, and ultimately to affirm in his own heart whether or not the Spirit has called him to serve as an elder of Bethany Church (Acts 20:28).

During this period his life will be observed by the elder body and the congregation where his call is collectively observed and ultimately qualified by his consistent testimony of a pure life in the eyes of all.

It is God who calls him, the congregation who acknowledges him to be a godly and qualified man (Acts 6:5), and the elders who appoint him to his task (Acts 14:23; Tit. 1:5).

When his year of testing has been successfully completed and he receives the blessing and recommendation of the elder body, the elder candidate will be recognized by the church body in an ordination service where he will be officially received by the leadership of the church, and a public announcement, setting him aside for special ministry (1 Tim. 4:4). The ordination service will communicate the following message to the new elders: *"We commend you to the ministry of elder. We stand with you, we support you, and we affirm your right to function as a leader of Bethany Church."*

TERM

1. Elders will serve continuously as long as they possess the character qualities and fulfill the standards of leadership and service described.
2. Any member of the church body may and should initiate church discipline against a sinning elder who is not exhibiting the character of fulfilling his responsibilities as an elder. An accusation against an elder should not be received "except on the basis of two or three witnesses" (I Timothy 5:19).

TERMINATION

1. Any elder may resign by written notification to the remaining elders. Any elder(s) may be removed from office by the unanimous decision of the remaining elders for any of the following reasons:

- a. Physically incapacitated
- b. Spiritually or morally unqualified or fails to fulfill his responsibilities or meet the qualifications outlined in this document under.
- c. Doctrinally unqualified - fails to agree with the doctrinal statement outlined in the constitution and this document.
- d. If an elder(s) is unqualified, but refuses to resign, he may, at any time, be removed by unanimous decision of the remaining elders.
- e. If his removal is because of sin and he refuses to repent, he is to be dealt with as outlined in "Discipline of Members" and is to be "rebuked in the presence of all, so that the rest may be fearful of sinning" (I Timothy 5:20).

MEETINGS

1. Elders will need quality time to pray together, talk over doctrinal issues, discuss people concerns and missionary needs, engage in creative thinking and planning, and handle the practical matters they cannot delegate. Therefore, regular meetings of the elders shall be held monthly, unless otherwise modified by the elders. Church members are encouraged to bring matters of concern to the elder body.
2. The elders shall operate under the principle of total unanimity in all decision-making matters (I Corinthians 1:10, Acts 15:25, Philippians 2:2). There shall be no abstentions. If there are salaried elders, they shall not make decisions regarding their own employment or compensation package. A quorum is necessary to conduct an elders meeting. A quorum shall consist of two-thirds of the elders currently serving. Men who are going through the selection process shall not be entitled to a vote but will observe and support the elders who have been recognized by the church.

10. Tenth Amendment

Under "II. Church Officers and Committees, Section 1. Officers" change the following statement:

The officers of the church shall be: President, one or more Vice Presidents, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurer. The President and Vice Presidents shall be selected only from those persons serving as Trustees. The Secretary and Assistant Secretary shall be those persons elected as clerk and Assistant Clerk by the church membership. The Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer shall be those persons elected as such by the membership of the church.

Change to:

The officers of the church shall be: President, Vice President, and Secretary. The President and Vice President shall be selected only from those persons serving as Trustees. Stewardship Team members shall be those persons elected as such by the membership of the church.

Change the following statement from: *“(6) The church shall elect annually a church treasurer and assistant treasurer, if necessary, as its financial officer. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out, upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel, all money or things of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements of the preceding month. The treasurer’s report and records shall be audited annually by a Certified Public Accountant. The treasurer shall be bonded, the church paying for the bond.”*

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

“The church may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to the assistant treasurer or a church secretary who will assist the elected treasurer. All church records are church property and shall be kept in the church office when an office is maintained.”

Change to:

“The financial responsibilities of receiving, preserving, and paying out is the duty of the Stewardship Team members who work in conjunction with an accounting firm keeping at all times an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements of the preceding month.”

“Upon rendering the annual account at the end of the fiscal yearend its acceptance and approval by the church, the records shall be delivered by the Stewardship Team leader, who shall keep and preserve the account as a part of the permanent records of the church.”

“The church may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to an assistant or church secretary who will assist the Stewardship Team and accounting firm. All church records are church property and shall be kept in the church office when an office is maintained.”

11. Eleventh Amendment

Under “III. Church Program Organization, (2) The Church Training Organization” change the following statement:

“(2) The Church Training organization shall serve as the training unit of the church. It’s tasks shall be to train church members to perform the functions of the church; train church leaders; orient new church members, teach Christian theology, Christian ethics, Christian history, and church policy and organization; and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.”

“Church Training shall be organized by departments for all ages and conducted under the direction of a Church Training Director.”

Change to:

Discipleship Ministries will help develop strategies for deepening the spiritual life of the church through focus on the worship, Word of God, prayer, sharing the faith, fellowship, ministry, discovering and utilizing spiritual gifts, and Spirit-filled life and living.

The duties of this ministry shall include but are not limited to developing, promoting, and supporting discipleship and equipping for all ages from children, students, and adults.

It's tasks shall be to train church members to perform the functions of the church; train church leaders; orient new church members, teach Christian theology, Christian ethics, Christian history, and church policy and organization; and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination."

12. Twelfth Amendment

Under "VI. Church Finances," Section 1. Budget" change the following statement:

Section 1. Budget

The Finance Committee shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by items the amount needed and sought for all local and other expenses.

Change to:

The Stewardship Team shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by items the amount needed and sought for all local and other expenses.

Under "Section 2. Accounting Procedures"

change the following statement:

All funds received for any and all purposes shall pass through the hands of the church treasurer, or financial secretary, and be properly recorded on the books of the church. Those who have responsibility that involves actual handling of funds shall be bonded, the church paying the bond.

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

Change to:

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

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

Under "Section 3. Operating Bank Accounts" change the following statement:

The church will maintain checking accounts and other accounts at banks or other financial institutions previously approved by the Finance Committee. Bank resolutions granting authority for specific persons to sign checks or orders of withdrawal must be recommended by the Finance Committee and approved by the congregation in a regular business meeting. The church treasurer shall always be one of those persons authorized to sign on accounts. The corporate secretary shall sign all bank and/or other financial resolutions and affix the corporate seal.

Change to:

The church will maintain checking accounts and other accounts at banks or other financial institutions previously approved by the Stewardship Team. Bank resolutions granting authority for specific persons to sign checks or orders of withdrawal must be recommended by the Stewardship Team and approved by the congregation in a regular business meeting. The church trustee president shall always be one of those persons authorized to sign on accounts.