

# Fellowship Baptist Church Constitution and By Laws

## I. CHURCH ORDER

### A. RECEPTION OF MEMBERS

1. Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, giving evidence of a change of heart, and adopting the views of faith and practice held by this church as set forth in this document, may upon baptism by immersion be received into its membership.
2. Members from other churches holding the same faith may be received by letter of recommendation and dismissal from their respective churches. If the person for various reasons is unable to secure a letter, he may be received by a statement of faith.
3. Any member who has been excluded from church membership, may upon making satisfactory explanation to the church be restored to full membership.
4. All candidates for membership shall be examined by the Pastor and then be presented before the members of this church for reception during the invitation of any service of the church. This will be by a voice confirmation. Three-fourths must vote in favor of reception.

### B. REMOVAL OF MEMBERS

1. Automatic Removal
  - a. By death of the member.
  - b. By request of the member.
  - c. By transfer of membership to another church. \*
  - d. By absence. The membership of any individual shall be removed without notice if the member in question has not attended a regular church service in the preceding six months.\*

\* The pastor may choose to waive these provisions (c and d above) if, in his discretion, there is good cause to do so. Such reasons may include, but are not limited to, college students, military personnel, shut-ins, missionaries, evangelists, or others who are legitimately unable to regularly attend services.

2. By church discipline.
  - a. Definition: Discipline is that procedure including Christian teaching, training, admonition and rebuke both private and public, with the view of helping the individual grow in grace, mature in the individual faith, break off from sin and live wholly for the Lord. At such time that a member shall refuse to receive such help it will be necessary for the church to exclude him from the membership.
  - b. Church action:
    - (1) Unscriptural conduct or radical departure from the Articles of Faith held by the Church shall be considered sufficient grounds upon which

such member may be removed from the church roll (Romans 16:17,18; I Corinthians 5:1-13; Galatians 1:8,9). The action to discipline a member shall at all times be first recommended by the Pastor and Deacons and be voted upon by a majority of those active members voting at any business meeting of the church.

- (2) When a member is out of fellowship as provided in subparagraph (1) above, such person shall be dealt with in accordance with Matthew 18:15-18.
- (3) A member under the process of discipline is automatically released from any office or position, is deprived of the right to vote, and cannot speak at business meetings except in the matter regarding his discipline.
- (4) A member who refuses to repent and be restored shall be removed from the membership of the church by a majority vote.
- (5) After time has elapsed and his repentance is proven to be genuine he may again apply for membership.

### **C. OUR GOAL IN MEMBERSHIP**

1. That we strive to have a Regenerated church membership (John 3:16).
2. That we strive to have a Spiritual church membership (Matthew 5:48; Romans 8:1-9).
3. That we strive to have a Separated church membership (John 17:14,15; I John 2:15).
4. That we strive to have a Compassionate church membership (John 20:21).

### **D. DUTIES OF MEMBERS**

1. The government of this church is by its members.
2. To work towards the acquisition of Scriptural knowledge, constant progress in grace and spirituality, consistency in conduct and the control of unholy temper.
3. To pray for their Pastor, to manifest a tender regard for his reputation, and also to pray for the work of the church that many souls will be saved and that those who are saved might be rooted and grounded and built up in the faith.
4. All members should bring themselves to the realization that we are a part of the body of our Lord Jesus, that we are of the household of Faith, and that in God's sight we are brothers and sisters. It is therefore our duty to love each other as such, to love and pray for our Church as our earthly home, and to strive to honor our Lord in all we do, say, or act, bearing in mind that we are epistles of Christ, known and read by men.
5. To contribute according as God has prospered toward the maintenance of the church and its missionary program; and in general, assist in bearing expenses and sharing the duties and services of this congregation.

## **E. MEETINGS OF THIS CHURCH**

1. The congregation shall meet regularly every Lord's Day for public worship.
2. The congregation shall meet at least once in each week for prayer service.
3. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed at least once each quarter.
4. Regarding business meetings:
  - a. Regular business meetings are to be held quarterly (April, July, October, and January).
  - b. Special meetings may be called when necessary, providing two weeks notice has been given.
  - c. An emergency business meeting may be called at any regular service by the Pastor or acting Moderator, with the consent of three-fourths of the voting members present. This business meeting must have a specific agenda set and no new items of business may be brought up at this meeting.
  - d. These meetings shall be conducted in a decent and orderly way.
    - (1) Every business meeting shall be opened and closed by prayer.
    - (2) No second motion shall be entertained until the one under consideration has been disposed of, except a motion of amendment, adjournment or "puts the question."
    - (3) Any speaker who introduces any matter foreign to the subject under discussion shall be ruled out of order.
    - (4) Discourteous language or remarks meant to injure the reputation or feelings of any member shall be ruled out of order and shall forfeit the speaker's right to the floor.
    - (5) The moderator may speak upon any subject under discussion.
    - (6) Every active member wishing to speak shall rise and respectfully address the moderator.
    - (7) Every proposition presented for action of the church must be introduced by motion of one member and seconded by another.
    - (8) No member shall speak more than twice upon the same subject.
    - (9) All questions shall be decided by a majority vote, unless otherwise specified in this constitution.
    - (10) All church members 18 years of age and over are eligible to vote.

## **II. OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH**

We believe the scriptures require only two (2) offices in the church: the Pastor and Deacons, and we accept them as God-given.

### **A. THE PASTOR**

#### 1. Calling of a Pastor

- a. The Pastor is to be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. His election shall take place at a regular meeting called for the purpose, of which at least one week's public notice shall be given. The Deacons of the church shall be the pulpit committee to seek out a suitable pastor, and their recommendation will constitute a nomination. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one man at a time.
- b. Election shall be by ballot, an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present and voting being necessary to a choice. A quorum of 30% of the voting membership must be present at this meeting. The Pastor thus elected shall serve until the relationship is terminated for some reason. The Pastor's term of office shall be indefinite.

#### 2. Termination of Pastoral Relationship

- a. The pastoral relationship may be terminated by the Pastor - after having given the church 30 days written notice of his desire to close his pastorate.
- b. The pastoral relationship may be terminated by the church - after it has given the Pastor 30 days notice of its desire to close his pastorate. The church may give notice if the majority of members at a regular or called business meeting vote to terminate the ministry.

#### 3. Duties of the Pastor

- a. It shall be the duty of the Pastor to preach at the meetings of the church; to administer the ordinances of the gospel; to act as moderator at business meetings; to have in charge the welfare and oversight of the church. The Pastor will be responsible for any speakers in the church for any regular meeting of the church, or for any protracted meeting, or a missionary conference, or an evangelistic campaign. The Pastor shall be responsible for the selection of the pianist and musical program. The Pastor shall be an "ex-officio" member of any board. He shall be the Sunday School Superintendent and may appoint an Assistant Sunday School Superintendent. The Sunday School Superintendent will appoint Sunday School teachers, Department Heads, and has authority to dismiss them if necessary.
- b. The Pastor shall be the President of the Corporation. The Pastor shall be the moderator of the church; he may call the Deacons or the church together for special meetings to transact the business of the church; he shall devote his time and energies to the welfare of the church; he shall receive such compensation as the church may decide.

## **B. THE DEACONS**

1. There shall be two or more deacons (the maximum number determined by Pastor and Deacons) whose term of office shall be one (1) year. These men shall be recommended by the Pastor and incumbent Deacons, and voted on by the church at each annual meeting.
2. It shall be a duty of the Deacons to meet at least once each quarter. They may select a chairman and a secretary from among their own number. The secretary shall keep a record of the minutes and proceedings of all meetings. The chairman shall act as Moderator of the church in the absence or removal of the Pastor. The Pastor and Deacons shall constitute a standing committee for the purpose of examining questionable applications for membership and to which all matters of discipline shall be referred. The Pastor and Deacons shall act as a nominating committee for Church Clerk and Treasurer. It shall be a duty of the Deacons to seek out such members of the church who need pecuniary assistance and to use the alms of the church for their relief, to visit the sick, to prepare and distribute the elements of the Lord's Supper, and to assist the Pastor in the performance of his duties. Pastor and the Deacons shall recommend the Pastor's remuneration and all items of missionary payments to the church. The Deacons shall act in an advisory capacity concerning all matters of church business, and in the employing and dismissing of staff members.
3. When the church is a self-supporting church, the Trustees shall be composed of two Deacons (or more) selected annually by the Pastor and Deacons and approved by the church. The Trustees shall act in an advisory capacity in all matters concerning legal transactions and church properties. The chairman of the Deacons will act as chairman of the Trustees.

## **C. DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

1. The clerk shall keep a complete record of all the official acts of the church. He shall affix the church seal to, and certify all documents upon order of the church. He shall keep a complete and accurate registry of the active, inactive, and erased membership.
2. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to receive all monies from the Deacons. He shall keep an accurate account of all such monies received and disburse them only by the approval of the church. He shall give a report of the treasury at the regular business meetings of the church, all of which shall be kept on file. No designated funds shall be diverted from their purpose, except by vote of the church.
3. It shall be the duty of the Assistant Treasurer to serve under the direction of the Treasurer in any or all matters pertaining to the Office of Treasurer.
4. It shall be the duty of the Deacons and Assistant Treasurer to receive all offerings, to count the money together, to keep a record of the same, and to deposit the same to the account of the church.
5. The record of all the officers, boards, and committees shall be delivered to the properly elected successor.
6. The officers enumerated in paragraph C shall serve for one year, and shall be voted upon at the annual business meeting, unless there is a vacancy that needs to be filled.

### **III. ORGANIZATIONS**

- A. The church regards as integral parts of itself all organizations formed to carry out its activities and which use the facilities of the church. The Pastor and Deacons will have general oversight over such organizations and may ask for written reports whenever desired.
- B. Organizations may be formed upon the approval of the Pastor and Deacons and must conform to the spirit, policy, and teachings of the church.
- C. Officers of all organizations of the church, including sponsors of children, youth, and adult activities, shall be members in good standing and be approved by the Pastor and Deacons.

### **IV. AMENDMENTS**

This Constitution and By-Laws may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the church by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting, provided that the amendments do not conflict with the Articles of Incorporation. Notice of intention to amend with proposed amendment or amendments shall be made in writing and announced from the pulpit at all church worship services on the two Sundays immediately preceding the meeting. The Articles of Faith are irrevocable.

### **V. INDEPENDENT, FUNDAMENTAL BAPTIST CHURCH**

This church, now, or in the future, shall never in any manner become officially connected with any convention or association, but shall remain as an Independent, Fundamental Baptist Church.

### **VI. AUTHORIZED VERSION**

The Authorized Version (KJV) shall be the official text of this church, and shall be used in the Sunday School classes and church services.

### **Voided - VII. CHURCH AGREEMENT**

By this article the Church Agreement is incorporated into this document and supersedes the articles that address the selection of a Pastor, Deacon, Trustees, and certain financial transactions. This article is voided upon termination of the New Church Agreement. [This Church Agreement was terminated in September 2007 when Fellowship Baptist Church graduated from being a mission church with Northwest Baptist Missions to being an independent church.]