

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

OF

BAPTIST CHURCH

Preamble

Having received by faith the Lord Jesus Christ for our salvation; believing the Bible to be the Divinely Inspired, Infallible and Authoritative Word of God; accepting the historic, distinctive, Baptist principles in so much as they are in complete agreement with the Bible; and knowing that all things should be done decently and in order; we therefore band ourselves together as a body of born-again believers in Jesus Christ, who have been baptized by immersion in water following our salvation and hereby adopt the following constitution as our method of labor for the Lord.

Article I - Name

The name of this Church is: _____ Baptist Church of _____; incorporated under the laws of the State of _____ on _____.

Article II - Purpose

The purpose of this Church shall be, as a soul-winning institution, to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ; to minister the ordinances of the New Testament; to promote the spiritual growth of its members; to provide a Christian education in all of its aspects; and to evangelize the world as a Bible-believing, missionary-minded, evangelistically-alive, independent, fundamental Baptist church.

Article III - Character

Section 1 - DOCTRINAL POSITION:

A. Inspiration of the Bible

We believe the Holy Scriptures as contained in the Old and New Testaments to be the verbally and plenary inspired Word of God, inerrant, infallible, powerful and God-breathed. Psalm 19:7-11, II Timothy 3:16, 17, II Peter 1:16-21.

B. God the Father

We believe in God the Father, perfect in holiness, infinite in wisdom and measureless in power. We rejoice that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ. Matthew 6:9, Isaiah 40:28, Job 42:2, Proverbs 5:21, Jeremiah 33:3, and John 14:6.

C. Jesus Christ

We believe in the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His Virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and propitious death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal, pretribulational return for His Saints, and His pre-millennial return in power and glory with His Saints to establish His eternal reign in righteousness. John 1:1-14, John 14:9, Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:18-25, John 10:36, Hebrews 2:9, John 6:44-69, John 3:1-18, Romans 3:25, Revelation 1:5, Hebrews 9:22, I Peter 1:18,19, Acts 3:12-26, John 20, Hebrews 9:25, I Corinthians 15:12-28, I Thessalonians 4:13-18, I Corinthians 15:50-55, Acts 1:11, Titus 2:13, Jude 14, 15, Matthew 25:31-46.

D. The Holy Spirit

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, and the active person of the Godhead in the world today. We believe He is sent into the world to convince the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. John 16:7-11 We believe all born-again people are baptized into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit. I Corinthians 12:13 We believe in the indwelling of believers by the Holy Spirit. Romans 8:14-27 We believe the Holy Spirit teaches, guides and protects the believer in this life.

E. God and the Trinity

We believe there is one God, eternally existent in three persons; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. I John 5:7, John 1:18, I Corinthians 2:9,10. The Father is God - Romans 1:7. The Son is God - Hebrews 1:8, and the Holy Spirit is God - Acts 5:3,4.

F. Salvation:

We believe that there is no genuine salvation without repentance of sin which is generated by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God. John 16:7-11; II Corinthians 7:10

We believe that salvation is by grace through faith alone, in the finished, redemptive work of Jesus Christ on the cross and through His resurrection. Ephesians 2:8, 9; John 1:12,13; John 3:18 and 3:36

We believe that man is justified by faith in the shed blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 5:1

We believe that man is regenerated by the Holy Spirit as the Holy Spirit makes application of the Word of God to the life of the lost sinner. John 16:7-11

We believe that man is placed in the position of full sonship at the moment of salvation according to the doctrine of adoption

and that he will be completely conformed to the image of Christ at the resurrection. Romans 8:22-29; Ephesians 1:4,5

We believe that the believer is set apart as God's property at the moment of salvation and that he continues to become more Christ-like as he is progressively sanctified by the Spirit of God until, finally, he is completely sanctified at the resurrection when he is conformed to Christ's resurrection body. I Corinthians 6:11; II Peter 3:18; I Thessalonians 5:23

G. Eternal Security

We believe in the perseverance of the saints and that every born-again believer is eternally secure in our Lord Jesus Christ. John 10:27-29

H. Separation from the world:

We believe that all believers in our Lord Jesus Christ are called into the life of separation from worldly and sinful practices, and unto the Lord as His personal property. James 4:4; Romans 12:1-2, I John 2:15,16; II Corinthians 6:14-18

I. Evangelism

We believe that the commission of the true Church of Christ is to be evangelical, missionary, evangelistic and fundamental; therefore, we believe in carrying the Gospel to every creature, baptizing believers in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit as stated in Matthew 28:16-20.

J. Personality of Satan:

We believe in the personality of Satan, “That old serpent called the Devil, and Satan which deceiveth the whole world”. Revelation 12:9,10; Matthew 4:2-11; Isaiah 14:12-17; John 8:24

K. Mankind and Sin

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but through Adam’s sin the race fell, inherited a sinful nature, became alienated from God, and is totally unable to retrieve his former condition. Genesis 1:26,27; Romans 3:22,23; Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:12. We believe in the universality and exceeding wickedness of sin. Ezekiel 18:4; Romans 3:10-26 and Romans 6:23. We believe man is a sinner both by nature and by choice. Romans 5:12

L. Heaven and Hell:

We believe that Heaven is a place of eternal blessedness, and the destination of the saved. We believe that Hell is a place of eternal suffering and the destination of the unbeliever. II Corinthians 5:1-10; Revelation 20:1-15; Revelation 21:2

M. Good Works:

We believe that all Born-again believers in the Lord Jesus Christ should be careful to maintain good works. Ephesians 4:1; Titus 2:11-14; Titus 3:1-11

N. The Church:

We believe that the Church Universal consists of all those who in the present dispensation, truly believe and accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. We believe the Local Church, independent, autonomous, indigenous and free from interference by any ecclesiastical or political authority; subject only to the authority and Lordship of Christ, its Head. I Corinthians 1:2; Matthew 16:16-18.

We believe that there are two ordinances of the Church: Baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper. We believe that both of these are for the purpose of symbolizing the identification of the believer with the Lord Jesus Christ and that they have no saving merit in themselves. Matthew 28:19; Romans 6:1-6; I Corinthians 11:23-32; Luke 22:15-20

We believe that the Church is subject to the powers that be, as long as those God-appointed powers do not require the Church to disobey God. Romans chapter 13; Titus 3:1; and Acts 5:29

O. Last Things:

We believe in the pre-tribulation rapture of the Saints when Christ comes in the air to receive them unto Himself. We believe that all Saints, both the living and the dead, will be caught up to be with the Lord and shall be with the Lord from that time on, forever. I Corinthians 15:51-58; I Thessalonians 4:13-18. We believe that, following the rapture of the Saints, the Saints shall stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ in Heaven to be judged according to their works as Christians. We believe that crowns shall be given to those who have been found faithful and obedient in their service for Christ. Revelation 4:1-11. We believe these crowns are for the purpose of expressing love, thanksgiving and worship to the Lord Jesus Christ who loved us and gave Himself for us. Revelation 4:10-11. We believe there will be a seven-year period beginning with the rapture of the Saints, and ending with the literal second coming of Christ to the Earth with His Saints, which is called the Tribulation Period. We believe that during this time the Church will be with Christ in Heaven, and that God's judgment will be poured out upon unbelieving men on the Earth. We believe this will be the time of the revelation of the antichrist and the false prophet who will deceive the world, including Israel for the first half of the Tribulation Period. We believe the antichrist will make a seven-year covenant with Israel during this time and will break it in the middle of the seven-year period when he sets himself up in the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem to rule over the entire Earth. We

believe that the second half of the Tribulation Period is called the Great Tribulation and that during this time, God will take the remnant of Israel, 144,000 in number, 12,000 out of each of the twelve tribes of Israel, to a place prepared for them in the wilderness to protect them from His wrath during this second half of the Tribulation Period. Daniel 9:24-27; Ezekiel chapters 37 and 38; II Thessalonians 2:1-12; Matthew 24:9-51; and Revelation chapters 6-18.

We believe that, just before the second coming of Christ with His own to the Earth, the Wedding Feast of the Lamb will take place in Heaven. At that time the Church, the Bride of Christ, made up of all the redeemed will be married to the Groom, Jesus Christ, and will return in triumph with Him to the Earth to establish Christ's Earthly reign. Revelation 19:5-16; II Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:22-33. We believe in the literal, pre-millennial return of the Lord Jesus Christ with His Saints at the close of the Tribulation Period to establish His Earthly reign for a literal thousand years. We believe that this is why Christ taught His Disciples to pray, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven." Revelation chapters 19,20. We believe that after being loosed for a brief time, Satan shall be bound and cast into the Lake of Fire with the False Prophet and the Antichrist and all of those who refused the Grace of God manifested in Jesus Christ. Revelation chapter 20. We believe in a literal resurrection from the dead: the believers unto life everlasting, and the unbelievers unto condemnation and the Lake of Fire forever. I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 20:11-15. We believe that God will make a New Heaven and a New Earth wherein dwells righteousness for the enjoyment of His redeemed for all eternity. Revelation chapters 21,22 and II Peter 3:13.

Section 2 - COVENANT

We agree to be loyal to the Word of God in deed and truth, to back our Pastor, to be faithful in attendance at all services unless providentially hindered, to support the Lord's work with regular tithes and offerings and prayer, to be faithful in private devotions, to not listen to, accept as part of my life, or follow anything contrary to sound doctrine, Christian conscience and separation; to live exemplary lives so as to challenge other Christians to Holier living; to be a testimony to those who know not our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church.

If the time should come when I can no longer uphold the doctrine and the application of Scriptural teaching held by my Church, or cannot be satisfied upon inquiring, that facts relative to the operation of its ministries are presented honestly without dissimulation, nor follow my Pastor when he is upholding the doctrine and application of Scriptural teaching held by my Church, I will quietly withdraw all my contact and association from the Church so as not be used of Satan to cause confusion and division, and thus be brought before the Church for discipline.

Section 3 - POLICY

The leadership of this Church shall be vested in the Under-shepherd, who is the Pastor, and the Council who shall recommend to the congregation those things which they feel the Church should do or undertake. In matters of discipline and spiritual direction, the Pastor and the Deacons shall determine policy according to the dictates of the Holy Scriptures. The Pastor and the entire Council shall make recommendations concerning legal matters and physical properties, and the congregation shall decide on all recommendations by voting. Details are given in this constitution.

Section 4 - SCRIPTURAL CONVICTIONS

A. Discipline of children:

It is our conviction based on the Holy Scriptures, the Bible, that “a child left to himself bringeth his Mother to shame,” (Proverbs 29:15) and “The rod of correction and reproof will bring wisdom to a child.” “Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.” (Proverbs 22:15) We believe, therefore, that a child should receive corporal punishment when needed, administered with love and concern, and accompanied with a thorough explanation of why he or she is being punished. We believe it is important to pray with the child who is being disciplined, encouraging them to seek God’s forgiveness and His help to live as he or she ought.

B. The family unit:

We believe the family was the first institution established by God. We believe children are the property of God, and that He places them in the custody of their parents, to whom He gives the responsibility for discipline, education and training along with spiritual guidance. Genesis chapters 3,4; Proverbs 23:22; Ephesians 6:1,2; Exodus 20:12. We also believe it is the God-given responsibility of the Church, through its ministries to strengthen this discipline and teaching as a second line of defense. I Thessalonians 5:11-25; and Ephesians.

C. Education:

We believe, that in order to protect the minds of our children from the godless philosophies of the world, namely: communism, socialism, humanism, evolution, the occult, etc., it is the Church’s sacred responsibility to educate the children of its families and the families of other churches of like convictions and beliefs. Psalm 1:1-6; Proverbs 22:6; Matthew 28:19,20; Acts 5:42

Article IV - Membership

Section I - RECEPTION OF MEMBERS

Candidates for membership shall publicly make known the desire to unite with this Church by coming forward at the close of any regular service of the Church. At that time they shall be given a copy of the constitution, by-laws, covenant and policies of North Houston Baptist Church. After they have had opportunity to read these documents, the Pastor and the Deacons, or just the Pastor shall meet with them at their convenience and give them opportunity to give their testimony of their salvation experience and to ask any questions they might have about the Church. At the next regular meeting of the Church, the congregation shall then vote on receiving them into the membership. Upon acceptance, the person or persons shall then be welcomed into the membership of the Church by being offered the Right hand of fellowship. Those coming by baptism, by letter, and by statement of Christian experience will be received into membership after a five (5) week waiting period.

A. By Baptism:

Any person who has received the Lord Jesus Christ as his/her personal Savior, and has been Scripturally baptized by immersion may request membership in the church. Baptism does not constitute automatic membership in the local church. Any person who has been saved and baptized may be voted into membership upon request. Those 16 and over may be members.

B. By Letter:

When a person from another church of like faith and practice shall request membership in this church by transfer of letter of recommendation from their former church, they shall be given a Constitution booklet, shall be interviewed by the Pastor and at least one Deacon so that they may share their salvation experience and account of their baptism, and then be voted into the membership at the next regular service.

C. By Statement of Christian Experience:

Any person who has been born-again by faith in Jesus Christ, and has been baptized by immersion in a Church of like faith and practice and has no regular letter of dismission may be received on the strength of their Christian experience and baptism.

D. By Restoration:

Members of this Church from whom the hand of fellowship has been withdrawn may be restored upon their demonstration of true repentance and good intentions.

Section 3 - DISMISSAL OF MEMBERS

A. By Letter:

A member, upon request of another Church of like faith and practice may be dismissed to the fellowship of that Church by letter of recommendation.

B. By Erasure:

A member uniting with a Church other than one of like faith and practice may be dismissed by their request, and the name shall be removed from the membership of the Church. A member uniting with any other Church without notifying this Church is automatically removed from the membership of this Church.

C. By Exclusion:

A member may be removed upon failing to respond to Scriptural discipline.

D. By Death:

E. By Inactivity:

When a member is absent for three (3) months without sufficient reason, he/she will lose any voice in regard to church business. When a member is absent for six (6) months without sufficient reason, he/she shall be excluded from church membership. No letter of transfer will be granted until they are reconciled. In the meantime, it shall be the responsibility of the Pastor and Deacons to make every effort to bring about reconciliation. All members of the church will be marked with an asterisk (*) in the Church Directory.

F. By Non-Conformity:

A member, or candidate for membership in this Church shall forfeit his/her rights as a member by failing to submit to the Doctrine, Covenant, or Constitution of this Church.

Section 4 - VOTING

Members eighteen (18) years old or older shall be eligible to vote on all matters of business which are legally and properly presented in any business meeting. Except as otherwise specified, a majority vote of all members present and voting shall be required for the passage of any motion, resolution, or transaction of any business. A quorum is 20% of the active members of voting age.

Article V - Officers and Duties

Section 1 - OFFICERS

The elective officers of this Church shall be the Pastor, Deacons, Trustees, Church Treasurer, and Church Clerk. Qualifications of all officers and teachers, whether elected or appointed, must be in accord with the Scriptures: that is, they are to be sound in doctrine, blameless in conduct, mature, of good reputation, and faithful in their support of the Church and the Church covenant. The offices of Trustee, Clerk and Treasurer are not required by Scripture but are for the purpose of maintaining a proper

testimony concerning government, legal matters and society in general.

Section 2 - ELECTION AND DUTIES

A. Pastor:

The Pastor shall be chosen by at least a 2/3 majority vote of members present and voting at a business meeting called for this purpose, and he shall be chosen from candidates recommended by the pulpit committee. A 3/4 majority vote of those present and voting shall be required to dismiss a Pastor. The Pastor, when called, shall be for an indefinite period. The terms of the call given to the Pastor will be recommended to the congregation by the Council for congregational vote of approval.

Qualifications for Pastor of this Church shall be as stated for a Bishop in I Timothy 3:1-7 and for Elders in Titus 1:5-9.

The duties of the Pastor shall be: To regularly preach the Word of God so as to feed God's people and to make known the way of salvation to the lost; to conduct the worship services of the Church; to administer the ordinances; to supervise the teaching ministry of the Church; to faithfully perform the pastoral duties among the members and prospects; He shall oversee all the ministries of the Church. He shall be responsible for the pulpit and the supply of it.

B. Deacon:

There shall be as many Deacons as the Pastor and the Council deem necessary. Candidates for the position of Deacon in this Church shall be nominated by the Pastor's Council which shall act as a nominating committee, and shall be presented to the congregation in the form of a posted notice on all bulletin boards of the church for one month before the elections. Additional written nominations may be added to these posted lists by the congregation to be considered by the Pastor and the Council. If there are no reasons why the additional nominees do not meet the requirements for the office, their

names will be added to the final ballot. All nominations shall be subject to approval by the Pastor. They shall be elected by a majority vote of the members present and voting and shall serve a three-year term beginning with their installation on the first Sunday in January. Deacons shall only be elected after being tried and proven and found to be qualified and worthy. I Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:3.

The responsibilities of the Deacons shall be: To counsel together with the Pastor, to share vision, to pray to help discern God's will, to follow and support the Pastor and to help promote harmony among God's people. They also share the responsibility for the care and upkeep of the property and equipment, the opening and closing of buildings, seeing that temperature and lighting are sufficient and making sure that ushers who are qualified are present and functioning at every service. In cases of Church discipline, they shall assist the Pastor in administration. They shall assist in the serving of communion and in the baptismal services. It shall also be their responsibility to assist the Pastor in meeting with candidates for membership in the Church when the Pastor deems it necessary. The Deacons of this Church, as its spiritual overseers, shall also serve as the School Board of the Church. They shall work together with the Pastor, Administrator, and other spiritual leaders in the educational ministries of the Church to determine policies, set guidelines in keeping with the convictions and doctrinal beliefs of North Houston Baptist Church as they are believed to be set forth in the Holy Scriptures, and assist and advise the administration of the school in all aspects of that ministry.

Annual election of Board Chairman and Board Secretary shall be held at the first meeting of each calendar year. The Chairman of the Board of Deacons shall act as Moderator of all meetings of the Church. In his absence the Pastor will preside.

C. Trustees:

There shall be as many trustees elected as are necessary. They shall serve with the Deacons on the Pastor's Council. They are elected by the same manner as the Deacons and shall take office on the first Sunday in January, and shall serve for three years. Trustees shall have authority to maintain property by repairs, improvement, etc., and may spend up to \$300.00 without consulting the congregation, and that a list of such expenditures should be provided to the Council as a whole at each Council Meeting if the expenditure is outside the Annual Budget, as amended from time to time by the Congregation.

The Trustees of this Church serve as a liaison between the Church and Government as representatives of the Church in legal matters. All of the Deacons of this Church are also automatically Trustees along with those elected as Trustees.

D. Church Treasurer:

The Church Treasurer shall be elected to a three-year term by the congregation. The Church Treasurer shall see that funds are rightly dispersed, bills are paid, an accurate record is kept of all finances, and financial reports are given periodically.

E. Church Clerk:

The Church Secretary, or Clerk shall be elected to a three-year term by the congregation. The Church Secretary shall keep minutes of all Church meetings of the congregation for business purposes. These shall be posted on the bulletin board and a copy kept for a permanent record.

The Secretary shall also take information on all who make decisions or who come for membership in the Church, including Church letters.

F. Nominations:

The Pastor's Council shall act as a Nominating Committee. At the October Council Meeting nominations shall be made for any officers needed. A list of these nominations shall then be

posted until the November Council Meeting. Members of the Church in good standing, and of voting age may then make additional nominations for these offices in the space provided for that purpose on the posted list. At the November Council Meeting, the additional nominations will be considered to see if they meet Scriptural qualifications and that there is no reason they should not be on the ballot. The revised list shall then be posted until the December Annual Meeting.

Section 3 - OTHER OFFICERS AND ORGANIZATIONS

A. Pastor's Council:

The men who serve on the Pastor's Council will take office the first Sunday in January for a three-year term. The number will be as needed and deemed wise. All nominations shall be made by the Council which shall act as a nominating committee for all officers. The congregation can make nominations as previously explained. Council members shall be added as needed by vote of the congregation.

A Board of Directors consisting of no less than three (3) members of the Church Council shall be appointed by the Council to assist the President of the Bible College in the establishment of policies for and the monitoring of the finances of that institution. They, along with the Church Treasure, will provide a monthly report of the ministry and finances of the College.

B. All Paid Staff:

All paid staff shall be the prayerful choice of the Pastor. He, as overseer, reserves Scriptural right to call for the removal of any employee by presenting evidence which would justify the removal to either the School Board or the Church Council whichever is appropriate. I Peter 5:5; Hebrews 13:17; I Timothy 3:5. All paid and voluntary staff members who are members of North Houston Baptist Church, including those who teach in the Educational Ministries, Sunday School, Youth Ministries, Day School, etc., will be expected be

regular in attendance at all services of the Church unless providentially hindered, and to take part in the evangelistic outreach of the Church on a voluntary and regular basis in some way in which they are able in the light of their responsibilities.

Paid Staff Members of the Corporation, except for those under contract, shall provide two (2) weeks notice before resigning and shall be given two (2) weeks notice before being dismissed. In the case of Pastor, Assistant Pastor and School Administrator four weeks notice will be expected before resigning or before being dismissed. These requirements shall be followed except in the case of extreme circumstances or emergencies.

C. All Officers and Programs:

All choices of officers and programs will be subject to the Pastor's approval who is to watch for the souls of the flock. All other officers not designated here will be approved by the Pastor. Hebrews 13:1

Article VI - Meetings

Section I - FOR WORSHIP

- A. The stated regular meetings of the Church for public worship shall be held on Sunday morning, Sunday evening and Wednesday evening, as well as at any other time which the Pastor and the Council deem advisable.
- B. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be commemorated on the first Sunday of each month in the evening service and at such other times as the Pastor and the Council shall deem advisable.

Section 2 - FOR BUSINESS

- A. Congregational meetings shall be called by the Pastor as they are needed. Acts chapters 1,6
- B. Congregational meetings shall be prayerful and in accord with Scripture and Christian love, as all assembling of Saints should be.

Article VII - Ownership of Property

Section 1 - OWNERSHIP

For the sake of maintaining a sound, fundamental and uncompromising testimony, in the event that a faction should arise in the Church which did not agree with the doctrine, covenant, stand and/or policy of North Houston Baptist Church, the property of the Church, along with all assets and holdings shall remain with those who maintain the doctrines, covenant, stand and policy upheld by this document.

No gifts of real property should be accepted without consideration by, and vote of the Council and Congregation.

Section 2 - DISSOLUTION OF ORGANIZATION

For the sake of preserving a testimony, or in the event that the time should ever come that the members (and especially the elected leaders) cannot find a Pastor with sufficient courage to stand for the doctrinal position and policies of the Church, the members are authorized to dissolve the organization and to dispose of the property. All money received for the sale of the property will go for the spread of the Gospel through similar organizations, mission works, etc., with the same evangelistic and doctrinal emphasis as that of North Houston Baptist Church. This is not a provision for failure, but a precaution against the flood of apostasy and greedy men who will increase as the time grows closer to the end.

BY LAWS

1. Any member of the Church 18 years old or older shall be entitled to vote on all matters of business brought before the Church.
2. All business meetings of the Church shall be opened and closed with prayer.
3. The purchase or sales of property, loans, erection of new structures, or all major changes shall be by the consent of the congregation.
4. We believe the Church should give at least 10% of its income to the Lord's work outside the local realm. This 10% or more may be from the regular budget, or gifts in addition to it. This decision shall be made by the congregation, and the Church will also decide what missionary works to support.

These by-laws may be altered, suspended, or amended at any business meeting of the Church by a 2/3 majority vote of the members present and voting.

CHURCH COVENANT

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