

PREAMBLE

We the members of the First Baptist Church of Chattahoochee, do establish and ordain this document as adopted by the Church as the Constitution and By-laws under and by which our congregation and its affairs shall be governed. By His Spirit, God first called His servants to unite into what would be called First Baptist Church of Chattahoochee in 1897. Since then, the Church has remained a fellowship of evangelical believers in Jesus Christ, committed to understanding, living, and teaching His message. We unite to spread the supremacy of God by treasuring Christ together and building laborers in the local church. As reflected by our Statement of Faith and Church Covenant, we receive Christ as our supreme lawgiver and take the Bible alone as the standard by which matters of belief and conduct are measured. Our mission as a church body includes exulting the Savior, examining the Scriptures, entreating the Sovereign, equipping the saints, evangelizing the lost, and enjoying the saved.

This Church is presently a cooperating member of the Greater Atlanta Baptist Network, the Georgia Baptist Mission Board and the Southern Baptist Convention. We recognize that there is mutual helpfulness in the association of churches who share in such agreement of faith and practice. We also believe that the Greater Atlanta Baptist Network, the Georgia Baptist Mission Board, and the Southern Baptist Convention are organizations which have as their sole purpose the promotion and support of missions, education, and benevolence in keeping with the spirit of the Constitution of this Church. We therefore agree to participate in these organizations through our duly elected messengers and our support of the causes which these organizations represent.

ARTICLE 1 - Membership

SECTION 1 - Admission to Membership

Clause 1 - Membership Requirements:

Candidates for membership must –

1. Be Trinitarian believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, exhibiting evidence of regeneration;
2. Profess the Bible, consisting of the Old and New Testaments, is totally true and trustworthy without any mixture of error; and
3. Desire to faithfully participate in this church's worship and service, submitting in the Lord to its government, and heeding its discipline.
4. Profess the doctrines of our church as expressed in the Statement of Faith without exception; and
5. Promise to keep the commitments expressed in the Church Covenant without exception.

Clause 2 - Membership Norms:

Any candidate desiring to belong to the church while taking exception to a portion of the following norms may still be considered. As stipulated in Article 2, Section 1: The Assembled Congregation is responsible for maintaining its membership. The Assembled congregation has exclusive and ultimate authority in receiving or rejecting candidates for membership and intends to do so in accordance with these requirements and norms.

Nonetheless, The Assembled Congregation may receive or retain candidates who do not meet these norms as it chooses. Candidates for membership are expected to:

1. Be baptized as believers in obedience to Christ;¹

Clause 3 - Membership Procedures:

1. Applicants should attend the membership course prior to being admitted into membership.
2. If an applicant is not able to attend one or all of the membership classes, a make-up session may be scheduled at an agreeable time to cover the course content with the applicant.
3. A membership interview with at least two elders shall be conducted with each prospective member. The purpose of this interview is for the elders to make a determination, as far as is humanly possible, of whether the applicant affirms the church's core doctrinal teachings, is truly regenerate, and has intentions and desires to submit to the church's leadership.
4. An applicant for membership should be announced at least three weeks before a Church Conference. During that announcement period, church leadership will remind the congregation of the upcoming vote through multiple means.
5. It shall be the responsibility of any member intending to vote 'nay' to make that known to the elders in the announcement period of any applicant for membership.
6. If the candidate is seeking to be admitted with an exception to Membership Norms, or if an objection has been brought to the Elders during the announcement period, a closed Church Conference shall be held to provide an opportunity for the Elders to share their recommendations concerning the applicant(s) for membership and provide an opportunity for members to discuss and vote.
7. If no objections are brought to the Elders during the announcement period, an open Church Conference may be held to provide an opportunity for the Elders to recommend them for membership and provide the opportunity for members to vote on applicants' membership.
8. An applicant shall be received into membership upon the recommendation of the Elders and subsequent unanimous agreement of the Church.

¹ This is to be interpreted as participation in evangelical credo-baptism by immersion.

9. If there is not unanimous agreement, a Church Conference may be called to address the question. A three-quarter (75%) majority vote shall be sufficient for receiving an applicant into membership.
10. Failure to secure such agreement does not prevent an applicant from future application, but the above procedures must be followed each time regardless of previous membership applications.

SECTION 2 - Expectations for Members' Conduct

Clause 1 - Members shall be expected to participate actively in the Church by:

1. Regularly attending its Lord's Day meetings;
2. Faithfully observing the Lord's Supper;
3. Submitting to its discipline and instruction;
4. Attending, as frequently as possible, its Church Conferences;
5. And diligently observing the responsibilities outlined in the Church Covenant.

SECTION 3 - Termination of Membership

Clause 1 - The Church shall recognize the termination of a person's membership following his or her death, and may do so following his or her voluntary resignation and/or joining with another true church.

The Church shall have authority to refuse a Member's voluntary resignation or transfer of membership to another church, either for the purpose of proceeding with church discipline, or for any other reason the Church deems necessary or prudent. A majority vote will be required to recognize the termination of a person's membership.

Clause 2 - If a member of the Church outwardly exhibits a pattern of unrepentant sin that would bring reproach to the name of Christ and his Church, it will be the duty of two or three Church members to approach that person in a spirit of gentleness in hopes of restoring such a person. If that person does not listen to the members, they shall bring the matter to the elders for inclusion at a closed Church Conference. If that person will not listen to the Church, then a vote will be had to determine whether to remove the member from the body. A majority vote is required to remove such a person from the membership.

Clause 3 - If a member voluntarily absents himself or herself from the Church for three months or more without showing any interest in the Church's teachings, meetings, or mission, it shall be the duty of the Elders to make a good faith effort to visit such a person

with a view towards winning that person back to active participation with the church. If the person refuses and still shows no interest in meeting together with the church, the Elders shall bring the matter before the congregation at a Church Conference to call for a vote on whether to remove that person from membership, as an act of church discipline. A vote of the majority will be necessary to remove such a person from membership.

ARTICLE 2 - CHURCH GOVERNMENT

SECTION 1 - Assembled Congregation

Clause 1 -The biblical offices in the Church shall be Elders and Deacons, but final earthly authority is vested in the assembled congregation. The vote² of the members of this Church at a properly called Church Conference, as provided in the By-Laws, shall be required to effect the following actions:

1. Accept applicants for membership into the Church;³
2. Issue a letter of transfer or recommendation concerning a member of the church;
3. Recognize termination of membership due to death, transfer of membership, or voluntary resignation;
4. Exercise church discipline, including termination of membership;
5. Appoint⁴ or Remove all officers of the Church and approve their job descriptions⁵;
6. Approve annual budgets of the Church;
7. Authorize any expenditures beyond the authority of other officers of the Church;
8. Approve any transactions regarding real property⁶;
9. Accept, reject, or otherwise dispose of any matter submitted to the members of the Church by the Council of Elders, or raised by motion at a business meeting;
10. Adopt, amend, or repeal the Constitution, Statement of Faith, or Church Covenant of this church;⁷

SECTION 2 - Elders

² Unless otherwise stipulated in this Constitution, the vote of a simple majority shall be sufficient to enact any other following actions. Those actions which require more than a simple majority have been indicated by use of footnotes.

³ As described in Article 1, Section, Clause 2, Point 9, "A three-quarter majority vote shall be sufficient for receiving an applicant into membership."

⁴ As described in Article 2, Section 2, Clause 6; Article 2, Section 3, Clause 2; Article 2, Section 4, Clause 1; and Article 2, Section 5, Clause 6; all of our officers require a three-quarter majority to be recognized and set apart for official service in the church.

⁵ This applies to any elder/pastor or deacon. A recommendation may come from the Council of Elders, but the Assembled Congregation is responsible for receiving all of its recognized officers.

⁶ This includes, but is not limited to purchase, disposal, sale, encumbrance, or lease of property.

⁷ As described in Article 5, Sections 2 and 3, adopting, amending, repealing, and otherwise altering the Constitution, Statement of Faith, and/or Covenant of this church requires a three-quarter majority vote, "provided the Amendment has been offered in writing at any previous regular Church Conference, and has been announced at every meeting of the church for two weeks prior to final consideration."

Clause 1 - Oversight of the ministry, resources, and facilities of the church shall be vested in a Council of Elders, which shall be comprised of men who satisfy the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. Qualifying candidates shall affirm all of the doctrinal distinctives of this Church, including evangelical credo-baptism, being ready to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it and shall have been baptized after their becoming a Christian.

Clause 2 - In accordance with 1 Timothy 2:12 and 3:2, women shall not serve as Elders.

Clause 3 - The Elders shall, in keeping with the principles set forth in the Scriptures, especially Acts 6:1-6; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 5:17; Titus 1:5-9; James 5:14; and 1 Peter 5:1-4, undertake the responsibility of shepherding God's flock by devoting themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word. They shall have particular authority:

1. To plan and oversee worship services;
2. To oversee the ordinances, namely Baptism and the Lord's Supper;
3. To examine and instruct prospective members;
4. To oversee the process of church discipline;
5. To examine and recommend candidates for all offices and positions;
6. To oversee the work of the Deacons/Deaconesses and all other agents of the church;
7. To hire, oversee, evaluate the performance of, and when necessary terminate paid church staff; and
8. To take any other action deemed necessary and proper for faithfully overseeing and shepherding the church which does not require a vote of the assembled congregation as articulated in Section 1.1. of this article.

Clause 4 - At least once in every year, the Elders shall at any Church Conference solicit from the congregation recommendations for the office of Elder. Any such recommendations shall be given to the Elders in private, and not publicly. The Council of Elders shall give due consideration to any recommendation received.

Clause 5 - No Elder shall hold the office of Deacon during his tenure.

Clause 6 - Elders shall be elected as follows: After receiving and considering the recommendations of the church, the Council of Elders shall at any Church Conference present to the church a list of nominees to the office

For a period of at least one month, the church shall consider whether such nominees are qualified for the office. During that announcement period, church leadership will remind the congregation of the upcoming vote through multiple means. If any Member believes one or more of the nominees to be unqualified, that Member shall express such concern to the Elders. The Council of Elders may, on the basis of that

expressed concern, remove names from the list of nominees. No name shall be added to the list of nominees which was not included on the initial list that was presented to the church by the Elders.

When a period of one month has elapsed, the Elders shall at the next Church Conference present a final list of nominees to the church, who shall vote Yea or Nay on each nominee in turn. The Moderator or his delegates shall count the votes, and any nominee having the approval of at least three-quarters (75%) of the Members present and voting on his nomination shall be an Elder, which the church shall in due haste publicly recognize and set apart as such.

Clause 7 - With the exceptions of the Senior Pastor and Associate Pastors, as defined in Sections 3 (Senior Pastor) and 4 (Associate Pastors) of this Article, Elders shall serve a term lasting up-to three-years.⁸ In accordance with the process described in Section 2, Clause 6 (Election of Elders) of this Article, having been re-elected and served six years, Elder-nominees shall not be eligible for re-election for at least one year. Neither the Senior Pastor nor Associate Pastors shall be subject to a reaffirmation vote, nor to any term limit.

Clause 8 - The Council of Elders will be responsible for hiring, overseeing, evaluating the performance of, and when necessary terminating all staff with the exception of those staff members who serve as officers of the church. They shall be responsible for creating and maintaining a Church Policy Manual which shall cover policies not covered in this Constitution.⁹

Clause 9 - The Council of Elders shall choose their Chairman and other Officers of the Elder Council and shall create and maintain their own By-Laws, which shall be made available to the church. In compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of Georgia, the Council of Elders shall serve as the Board of Directors of the Corporation, and the Chairman of the Elders shall serve as the president of the corporation.¹⁰

Clause 10 - Every Elder shall be expected to abide by the By-Laws of the Council of Elders of The First Baptist Church of Chattahoochee, and every Elder shall have a right

⁸ The Council of the Elders are expected to articulate one-year, two-year, and three-year terms during the nomination process. The internal procedures of the nomination process will be articulated in the By-Laws of the Council of the Elders.

⁹ As stated in Article 4, Section 5: The Church Policy Manual shall be kept in the church office and a copy shall be provided upon request to any member of the Church.

¹⁰ First Baptist Church of Chattahoochee is a legally registered 501(c)(3) Corporation. Legally, the Chairman of the Elders shall be recognized as the president of the Corporation in accordance with the document of incorporation.

to attend the entirety of every meeting of the Council, except as described in the By-Laws of the Council of Elders of The First Baptist Church of Chattahoochee.¹¹

Clause 11 - No person or group shall solicit money on behalf of the church or any of its ministries without the approval of the Council of Elders.

Clause 12 - An Elder shall be removed from office upon the vote of a majority of the Members present and voting on the question at any Church Conference. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 18:15-17 and those of the Apostle Paul in 1 Timothy 5:17-22.

Clause 13 - In the event that the Church has no Elders, the Church shall at the next Church Conference elect an Interim Moderator, who shall at each subsequent Church Conference nominate one or more men to serve as Elders, pursuant to section 3.2.2 of this Article, until an Elder is elected. The office of Interim Moderator shall dissolve immediately upon the election of an Elder.

SECTION 3. Senior Pastor

Clause 1 - Primary responsibility for preaching and teaching the Scriptures in public meetings of the church may be vested in a Senior Pastor. Only one Senior Pastor may be recognized at a time.

Clause 2 - The Senior Pastor shall be selected as follows: The Council of Elders shall at any Church Conference present to the church the name of one nominee to the position of Senior Pastor. For a period of at least one month, the church shall consider the nominee's gifts in preaching and teaching, and his commitment to minister personally to the members of this church. If any Member believes the nominee to be unqualified, that Member shall express such concern to the Council of Elders.

When a period of one month has elapsed, the Council of Elders shall at the next Church Conference present the nominee for Senior Pastor to the church, who shall vote Yea or Nay on his selection as such. The Moderator or his delegates shall count the votes, and if the nominee receives the approval of at least three-quarters (75%) of the Members present and voting on the question, he shall be a Member of the church, an Elder, and the Senior Pastor, whom the church shall in due haste publicly recognize as such.

Clause 3 - The Senior Pastor shall meet all the qualifications and fulfill the responsibilities of a Member of the church, as described in Article 1, Section 2 (Expectations for Members' Conduct). He shall satisfy all the qualifications and fulfill all

¹¹ The By-Laws of the Council of the Elders are expected to include provisions for limiting the authority of an elder during a period of church discipline or investigation into actions that have broken the By-Laws of the Council of the Elders or the covenant of church membership of First Baptist Church of Chattahoochee.

the duties and responsibilities of an Elder, as described in Section 2 of this Article. In terms of formal authority, there shall be no distinction between an Elder and the Senior Pastor.

Clause 4 - The Senior Pastor shall not be subject to a reaffirmation vote, nor to any term limit. A Senior Pastor shall be subject to the provisions of Section 2, Clause 5 of this Article.

Clause 5 - The Senior Pastor shall be removed from office and his employment terminated upon the vote of a majority of the Members present and voting on the question at any Church Conference. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 18:15-17 and those of the Apostle Paul in 1 Timothy 5:17-21.

SECTION 4 - Associate Pastors

Clause 1 - An Associate Pastor shall be selected as follows: The Council of Elders shall at any Church Conference present to the church the name of one nominee to the position of Associate Pastor.

For a period of at least one month, the church shall consider the nominee's gifts in the particular area of service to which he is being called, and his commitment to minister personally to the members of this church. If any Member believes the nominee to be unqualified, that Member shall express such concern to the Council of Elders.

When a period of one month has elapsed, the Council of Elders shall at the next Church Conference present the nominee for Associate Pastor to the church, who shall vote Yea or Nay on his selection as such. The Moderator or his delegates shall count the votes, and if the nominee receives the approval of at least three-quarters (75%) of the Members present and voting on the question, he shall be a Member of the church, an Elder, and an Associate Pastor, whom the church shall in due haste publicly recognize as such.

Clause 2 - An Associate Pastor shall meet all the qualifications and hold all the rights and responsibilities of a Member of the church, as described in Article 1, Section 2 (Expectations for Members' Conduct). He shall satisfy all the qualifications and hold all the duties and responsibilities of an Elder, as described in Section 2 of this Article. In terms of formal authority, there shall be no distinction between an Elder and an Associate Pastor.

Clause 3 - An Associate Pastor shall not be subject to a reaffirmation vote, nor to any term limit. An Associate Pastor shall be subject to the provisions of Section 2, Clause 5 of this Article.

Clause 4 - An Associate Pastor shall be removed from office and his employment terminated upon the vote of a majority of the Members present and voting on the question at any Church Conference. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 18:15-17 and those of the Apostle Paul in 1 Timothy 5:17-21.

SECTION 5 - Deacons

Clause 1 - Particular service to the church shall be provided by Deacons/Deaconesses, the number of which shall vary as the church has need, and who shall satisfy the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

Clause 2 - In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1-6, Deacons/Deaconesses shall not exercise a ministry of spiritual authority, but shall support the Elders' ministry of the Word, work to maintain the unity of the church, and care for the physical needs of the church.

Clause 3 - The Deacons/Deaconesses shall not meet together regularly as a body. Each diaconate position shall be created or dissolved upon the recommendation of the Elders and the subsequent agreement of a majority of the Members present and voting on the question at any Church Conference. The Deacon/Deaconess of Records and Deacon/Deaconess of Finance are excluded from this provision, as described in Article 4, Sections 1, 2, & 3.

Clause 4 - At least once in every year, the Council of Elders shall at any Church Conference solicit from the congregation recommendations for new diaconate positions and for qualified persons to fill new or vacant positions, which recommendations shall be given to the Council of Elders in private, and not publicly. The Council of Elders shall give due consideration to any recommendation received.

Clause 5 - No Deacon/Deaconess shall hold the office of Elder during his or her term.

Clause 6 - Deacons/Deaconesses shall be selected as follows: The Council of Elders shall at any Church Conference present to the church a list of nominees to the office of deacon/deaconess. During that announcement period, church leadership will remind the congregation of the upcoming vote through multiple means.

For a period of at least one month, the church shall consider whether such nominees are qualified for the office. If any Member believes one or more of the nominees to be unqualified, that Member shall express such concern to the Council of Elders, who may on the basis of that advice remove names from the list of nominees. No name shall be added to the list of nominees which was not included on the initial list.

When a period of one month has elapsed, the Council of Elders shall at the next

Church Conference present a final list of nominees to the church, who shall vote Yea or Nay on each of the nominees in turn. The Moderator or his delegates shall count the votes, and any nominee having the approval of three-quarters (75%) of the Members present and voting on his nomination shall be a Deacon/Deaconess, whom the church shall in due haste publicly recognize and set apart as such.

Clause 7 - Deacons/Deaconesses shall be reaffirmed, replaced, or removed by the church annually.¹²

Clause 8 - In the event a diaconate position becomes vacant, the Council of Elders may appoint a person to fill that position and assume its responsibilities, until such time as some person can be duly recognized by the church as a Deacon/Deaconess, but not longer than two consecutive Church Conferences.

Clause 9 - Ministry teams may be formed by a Deacon/Deaconess to assist him/her in fulfilling his/her roles. The Council of Elders and Staff shall provide assistance to the Deacons in the forming of ministry teams by helping identify Church members who have appropriate gifts and the desire to serve in particular areas. The Council of Elders may form additional ministry teams. Members of ministry teams shall be reported to the Church at a Church in Conference but no vote of confirmation by the Church is required.

Clause 10 - A Deacon/Deaconess may be removed from office upon the vote of a majority of the Members present and voting on the question at any Church Conference, except as otherwise specified by this constitution.

ARTICLE 3 - MEETINGS

SECTION 1 - The Lord's Day

Clause 1 - The Church shall meet every Lord's Day for public worship of God. Other religious services may be appointed as the advancement of the work of the Church may require.

Clause 2 - The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall normally be observed by the Church at least once a month.

SECTION 2 - Church Conferences

Clause 1 - The regular conferences of the Church for business shall be held every three months, and shall not be held in place of the regular Lord's Day public worship, but at some other time. Seeking the Lord's wisdom and blessing through thankful prayer shall

¹² Deacon/Deaconess of Records and Deacon/Deaconess of Finance shall not serve more than three consecutive annual terms, as described in Article 4.

be a part of every conference. Any change or postponement shall receive the notice and publicity required of special conferences.

Clause 2 - Special conferences of the Church for the transaction of business may be called by any Elder, and/or, ten percent (10%) of the church membership (via submitting a written request to any Elder).

Special conferences will be announced giving no less than seven days notice by publication in the church bulletin, and/or announcement from the pulpit, and/or targeted communications.

When a special conference is announced, a published docket of proposed business will be made available at the time of announcement whether in the church bulletin, from the pulpit, and/or targeted communications. This proposed docket may not be changed within the seven day minimum period of notice, as described above.

If the special conference is called by ten percent (10%) of the Church membership, as described above, the conference will be scheduled to take place within thirty days of receiving the written request signed by ten percent (10%) of the voting membership.

Clause 3 - Church Conferences, regular and special, may be called as open or closed to non-members, including guests and visitors. Attendance at a closed meeting will be restricted to members of the Church. This decision shall be the responsibility of the Council of Elders. The announcement of a Church Conference shall include a description as either open or closed.

Clause 4 - The Chairman of the Council of Elders or his Representative shall preside as Moderator at all Church Conferences, but shall have no vote, unless the Members be equally divided on a question.

Clause 5 - Church Conferences shall proceed according to a reasonable order, and the Members present, not less than ten percent (10%) of the Church membership, shall constitute a quorum to do business. Motions shall be adopted upon the agreement of a majority of the Members present and voting on the question, except on matters otherwise provided for in this constitution.

Clause 6 - Members must be physically present in order to Vote. For the purposes of this Constitution, "present" shall be defined as physically present.

Clause 7 - In the event that legal orders by local, state, or federal officials would prevent the Church from holding at least bi-monthly Church Conferences as required by this Constitution, and if the Council of Elders agree to abide by those orders, the Moderator shall declare duly-called meetings to be "virtual." In that case, all requirements in this Constitution for physical presence at Church Conferences shall be waived, and the

Church shall gather and conduct business by any technological means available to the majority of the Church. No other rule shall be affected by a virtual meeting.

SECTION 3 - Leadership Meetings

Clause 1 - The Council of Elders will meet regularly for study, prayer, and oversight of the Church. Unanimity is the goal and will be sought in a spirit of mutual submission. In the event an elder has a personal interest in the outcome of some matter before the Council of Elders, (e.g., when a decision may affect the financial interest of the elder or if an elder is subject to discipline) the Council of Elders may call for him to abstain from the consideration of the matter, and his absence shall not be counted in determining whether the elders have reached either a unanimous agreement or a majority decision.¹³

Clause 2 - At the regular Council of Elders meetings, minutes shall be taken of official business. These minutes shall be made available to Church members upon request. The Council of Elders shall be permitted to exclude time in executive session from their minutes.¹⁴

SECTION 4 - Practice of Baptism

Clause 1 - Our practice is to only baptize a person after the individual to be baptized has expressed faith in Christ. Unless physically unable, such a baptism shall be by immersion into water in the name of the trinity.

ARTICLE 4 - ADMINISTRATION

SECTION 1 - Deacon/Deaconess of the Records

Clause 1 - The Church shall select a Deacon/Deaconess of Records, who shall record the minutes of all regular and special Church Conferences, annually produce an up-to-date Membership Directory, and give reports as requested by the Council of Elders, particular Deacons/Deaconesses, and/or the Church. The minutes of those meetings shall be presented to the church no less than one week before the next scheduled conference.

Clause 2 - No Person shall serve more than three consecutive years as Deacon/Deaconess of Records.

¹³ The Council of Elders, excluding the Elder in question, shall vote on whether the Elder in question ought to be recused from the matter. A simple majority of the Council of Elders, excluding the Elder in question, shall be sufficient to effect the Elder in question's recusal from the matter.

¹⁴ An executive session is defined as a time of privacy during a regular meeting in which no business is officially transacted or recorded in the minutes, allowing those present to speak freely on the issue knowing that if necessary, they will revisit it as official business at a later point.

Clause 3 - In compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of Georgia, the Deacon/Deaconess of Records shall serve as the secretary of the corporation.

SECTION 2 - Deacon/Deaconess of the Finance

Clause 1 - The Church shall select a Deacon/Deaconess of Finance, who shall, with the advice of the Council of Elders, move to the Church, at a properly called Church Conference before the end of October, a budget. It shall be considered and voted upon by the Church at the final Church Conference of every fiscal year.

Clause 2 - No Person shall serve more than three consecutive years as Deacon/Deaconess of Finance.

Clause 3 - The Budget shall be adopted upon the motion of the Deacon/Deaconess of Finance and the subsequent agreement of a majority of the Members present and voting on the question.

Clause 4 - In the event of a failure of the Church to approve a new Budget by the beginning of the new Fiscal Year, church Staff shall continue to be compensated as specified by the most recently adopted Budget, with its amendments. No other spending shall be authorized until such time as a new Budget is adopted at any Church Conference.

In such an event, the Council of Elders may call a Special Church Conference, its sole order of business being the consideration of a Budget, with one week's notice by publication in the church bulletin, and/or announcement from the pulpit, and/or targeted communications to the Members of the Church.

Clause 5 - The Council of Elders shall have responsibility to oversee the faithful disbursement of the budget. Once adopted, the total amount budgeted shall not be overspent except in the following circumstances. As emergency may require, an officer, employee, or agent of the church may be authorized by a majority of the Council of Elders to exceed a budgeted line item up to four percent (4%) of the total budget. Any spending so authorized will be reported to the Church at its next regular meeting.

Amendments to the budget that exceed two percent (2%) of the original total budget shall be adopted upon the motion of the Deacon/Deaconess of Finance and the subsequent agreement of a majority of the Members present and voting on the question at any Church Conference.

Clause 6 - Oversight of and authority over all other resources of the church shall be vested in the assembled congregation. Upon the recommendation of the elders and the subsequent agreement of a majority of the Members present and voting on the question at any Church Conference, the congregation may fund certain designated accounts, distinct

from the operating budget, which shall be under the oversight and authority of the Council of Elders.

Clause 7 - A ministry team consisting of no less than three members of the church, a majority of whom are not elders, shall be appointed by the council of elders to assist the Deacon/Deaconess of Finance.

This ministry team, along with the Deacon/Deaconess of Finance, shall be responsible for additional oversight of the fiscal affairs of the church. To that end, they shall receive monthly reports which shall be their responsibility to review.

SECTION 3 - Financial Secretary

Clause 1 - The Elders of the Church shall hire a company or person who shall ensure that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as designated by the Church Policy Manual. Such a one shall also ensure that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept in books belonging to the Church, and that adequate controls are implemented to guarantee that all funds belonging to the Church are appropriately handled by any officer, employee, or agent of the Church. Such a one shall also be responsible for maintaining earning records pertaining to all staff members and filing the necessary reports to state and federal governments.

Clause 2 - Such a one shall render, at least once every month, an account of all financial transactions and of the financial condition of the Church to the Deacon/Deaconess of Finance, the appointed ministry team, and the Council of Elders. Any requested report rendered to the Council of Elders shall not contain identifying information regarding receipts.

Clause 3 - Such a one shall also be responsible for preparing regular reports of the account balances, revenues, and expenses of the Church to be presented at regular Church Conferences.

Clause 4 - Such a one shall be compensated. Such a one may be a member of the church, but must not concurrently serve as the Deacon/Deaconess of Finance, the appointed ministry team, or one of the Elders of the Church.

SECTION 4 - Church Property

Clause 1 - The Church shall have the power to receive, either by gift or purchase, and so hold such real, personal, or mixed property as it is authorized by the laws of the State of Georgia, and is deemed necessary or appropriate for the functioning of the Church, and shall have the power to dispose of such property by mortgage, bill of sale, deed, or

otherwise. All property shall be held in the name of the Church. No real property shall be purchased, disposed of, encumbered or leased without approval by a majority vote at a Church in Conference where notice of the conference and the proposed action have been given in writing at least two weeks prior to the conference.

SECTION 5 - Church Policy Manual

Clause 1 - The Council of Elders shall be responsible for creating and maintaining a Church Policy Manual which shall set forth Church policies not covered in this Constitution. The Church Policy Manual may not contain any policies or procedures that are in conflict with this Constitution. It shall also contain job descriptions for church staff members. The Church shall be informed when the Church Policy Manual is adopted or amended by the Elders. The Church Policy Manual shall be kept in the Church office and a copy shall be provided upon request to any member of the Church.

ARTICLE 5 - RATIFICATION & AMENDMENTS

SECTION 1 - Constitution Ratification

Clause 1 - This Constitution shall be ratified upon the approval of two-thirds of the Members present and voting on the question at a Church Conference, provided the Constitution shall have been offered in writing at any previous Church Conference, and shall have been announced at every public meeting of the church for four weeks immediately prior to final consideration.

SECTION 2 - Statement of Faith and Church Covenant

Clause 1 - The Statement of Faith or Church Covenant shall be amended by a vote of three-quarters (75%) of the Members voting on the question at any regular Church Conference, provided the Amendment has been offered in writing at any previous regular Church Conference, and has been announced at every meeting of the church for two weeks prior to final consideration.

SECTION 3 - Amendments and Alterations

Clause 1 - This Constitution shall be amended by a vote of three-quarters (75%) of the Members voting on the question at any regular Church Conference, provided the Amendment has been offered in writing at any previous regular Church Conference, and has been announced at every meeting of the church for two weeks prior to final consideration.