

CONSTITUTION

PREFACE

There are many good reasons why a New Testament Church should have Articles of Faith and a Constitution. Together they can greatly assist us in the efforts of biblically organizing and conducting the ministries which have been entrusted to us by our Lord Jesus Christ. It must be readily acknowledged, however, that these documents, despite their usefulness and precision, are not Scripture, but are to the best of our ability based on what Scripture teaches concerning church polity. It is with this keen awareness of our absolute dependence upon our great God and His Word, that these articles are set forth.

ARTICLE 1

NAME

The name of this church shall be Providence Baptist Church.

ARTICLE 2

FOUNDATION, PURPOSE, & PRIORITIES OF THIS CHURCH

The foundation of this church is the Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:20; 1 Corinthians 3:11), and its code of guidance in all its affairs is the Word of God. This church does here affirm its belief that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the inspired Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16; Mark 13:31).

The purpose of this church is found in Colossians 1:28 of the Holy Scriptures: "...we preach Christ, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus," with the goal of glorifying God in all we do (1 Corinthians 10:31).

The priorities of ministry for this church are to preach Christ (1 Corinthians 2:1-5), to worship God in spirit and in truth (John 4:23), to encourage fellowship among believers (Heb. 10:24-25; 13:1-2; Acts 2:42-47), to love and serve one another (Colossians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 12-14), to depend upon God in faith by means of prayer and reliance upon the Holy Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:17, Hebrews 4:16, Romans 8:14), and to spread the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ through evangelism, missions, and loving deeds (Matthew 28:18-20; 5:16; 1 Peter 2:9; 3:15).

ARTICLE 3

WHAT WE BELIEVE

I. THE WORD OF GOD

We believe that the Bible is God's Word, breathed out by him. It is inerrant, infallible, and the final authority for determining what is true (what we must believe) and what is right (how we must live). All truth claims and ethical standards must be tested by God's final Word, which is Scripture alone. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39;

16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

II. THE TRINITY

We believe that there is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

Genesis 1:1, 26; John 1:1, 3; Matthew 28:19; John 4:24; Romans 1:19, 20; Ephesians 4:5, 6

III. GOD THE FATHER

We believe that God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

IV. JESUS CHRIST

We believe that Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ, He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, truly God, truly man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever-present Lord.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 53:1-12; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11;

Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

V. THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration, He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

VI. SALVATION

We believe that the gospel is the divinely-revealed message concerning the person and work of Jesus Christ—especially his virgin birth, righteous life, substitutionary sacrifice, atoning death, and bodily resurrection—revealing who he is and what he has done with the promise that he will save anyone and everyone who turns from sin by trusting him as Lord.

We also believe that salvation is granted by God's grace alone received through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. Every believer is united to Christ, justified before God, and adopted into his family. Thus, in God's eyes there is no difference in spiritual value or worth among those who are in Christ. Further, all who are united to Christ are also united to one another regardless of age, ethnicity, or sex. All believers are being conformed to the image of Christ. By God's regenerating and sanctifying grace all believers will be brought to a final glorified, sinless state of perfection in the day of Jesus Christ.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

VII. SIN

We believe that God originally created Man in His own image, and free from sin; but, through the temptation of Satan, he transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original holiness and

righteousness; whereby his posterity inherit a nature corrupt and wholly opposed to God and His law, are under condemnation, and as soon as they are capable of moral action, become actual transgressors.

Human death (both physical and spiritual) as well as all animal death, disease, bloodshed, suffering, extinction, thorns and thistles, and all other natural evils (e.g., earthquakes, hurricanes, tsunamis, etc.) entered this world subsequent to, and as a direct consequence of, man's sin.

All men are sinners, inherently from Adam and individually (by choice), and are therefore subject to God's wrath and condemnation. All men are sinful, deserving of eternal punishment, their only hope of salvation is to repent and to place their faith in Christ alone.

Genesis 2:7, 2:16-17, 2:22-23, 3:6-20, 4:4-8; 1 Kings 8:46; Psalm 116:11; Proverbs 16:5; Isaiah 53:6; John 3:16-18, 12:48; Romans 3:23, 5:12, 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, 45-49; Ephesians 2:1-3; 2 Peter 3:9

VII. THE CHURCH

We believe that the primary role of the church is to worship God through the preaching of his word, teaching sound doctrine, observing baptism and the Lord's Supper, refuting those who contradict, equipping the saints, and evangelizing the lost. We affirm that when the primacy of the gospel is maintained that this often has a positive effect on the culture in which various societal ills are mollified. We affirm that, under the lordship of Christ, we are to obey the governing authorities established by God and pray for civil leaders.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation from both Old and New Testament.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

IX. BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church, which are baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of the believer in water into the name of the triune God. We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for commemoration of His death. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

X. RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

We believe that God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should

be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. The state shall not rule over the church or hinder it in following the commands of Christ from Scripture. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others.

Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power. The church also has the right to express political opinions and to call evil civil leaders to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ when necessary. The church also should encourage godliness among civil leaders and should pray for them all.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

XI. CHURCH COOPERATION

We believe that the pattern of Scripture encourages churches to cooperate to express unity as one body and for the purposes of the Kingdom of God. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations and local churches for purposes of the Kingdom of God. While cooperating is encouraged, each church should remain autonomous and should not be ruled or governed by other churches.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.

XII. STEWARDSHIP

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

XIII. FAMILY

We believe that God created mankind both male and female with inherent biological and personal distinctions between them and that these created differences are good, proper, and beautiful. Though there is no difference between men and women before God's law or as recipients of his saving grace, we affirm that God has designed men and women with distinct traits and to fulfill distinct roles. These differences are most clearly defined in marriage and the church but are not irrelevant in other spheres of life. In marriage the husband is to lead, love, and safeguard his wife and the wife is to respect and be submissive to her husband in all things lawful. In the church, qualified men alone are to lead as pastors/elders/bishops and preach to and teach the whole congregation. We further affirm that the image of God is expressed most fully and beautifully in human society when men and women walk in obedience to their God-ordained roles and serve according to their God-given gifts.

God created mankind male and female and that this divinely determined distinction is good, proper, and to be celebrated. Maleness and femaleness are biologically determined at conception and are not subject to change. The curse of sin results in sinful, disordered affections that manifest in some people as same-sex attraction. Salvation grants sanctifying power to renounce such dishonorable affections as sinful and to mortify them by the Spirit. We further affirm that God's design for marriage is that one woman and one man live in a one-flesh, covenantal, sexual relationship until separated by death. Those who lack the desire or opportunity for marriage are called to serve God in singleness and chastity. This is as noble a calling as marriage.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; Psalms 127; Psalms 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7; Genesis 1:27-28, 2:24; Matthew 5:27-30, 19:4-5; Mark 10:2-9; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7; Hebrews 13:4.

XIV. MISSIONS AND EVANGELISM

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

XV. THE LAST THINGS

We believe in the personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth and the establishment of His kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment, the eternal joy of the righteous and the endless suffering of the wicked.

Matthew 16:27; Mark 14:62; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; Philippians 3:20; I Thessalonians 4:15; II Timothy 4:1; Titus 2:13; I Corinthians 4:5; I Corinthians 15; II Thessalonians 1:7-10; Revelation 20:4-6, 11-15

ARTICLE 4

MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Requirements for Membership

The membership requirements of this church shall consist of persons who:

1. confess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
2. Are not living contrary to the word of God.
3. have been baptized by immersion, not sprinkled, or baptized as an infant; but baptized by immersion as a believer.
4. have been accepted into church membership according to the by-laws of this church.

Section 2: Membership Process

To become a member, the person who is seeking membership in this church must:

1. Attend church on a regular basis for at least 6 months to avoid rash decisions by the church or candidate for membership.
2. Complete the membership class that the church provides at that time.
3. Submit a membership profile in which they understand and agree to abide by and be held accountable for this church's beliefs, positions and policies as outlined in this Constitution and the Bylaws.
4. Sit down with the pastors of this church to share their testimony, to ask questions about the church, and to allow the pastors to ask questions pertinent to membership.
5. Submit to baptism by immersion if they have not been baptized by immersion already as a believer or were baptized as an infant.

Once the Requirements for Membership have been met:

6. Candidates for membership will be announced two weeks prior to the congregational vote for membership. This will give the congregation time to express any concerns they have about a candidate to the pastors. Two weeks after the initial recommendation the candidate may

be accepted into membership on a Sunday morning with a majority vote from the members present.

7. Once a candidate is received into membership, he or she relinquishes their membership in other churches. They will then be encouraged by the church to follow the Lord Jesus Christ through fellowship, the word, and by prayer, and will be encouraged to do the same for others in the congregation.

Should disagreement in any of these areas ever occur, members will hold this church and its leadership "harmless."

Section 3: Receiving Persons into Membership

The church shall receive members into membership in the following ways.

1. PROFESSION OF FAITH AND BAPTISM — Any person who comes to faith in Christ and is baptized by immersion shall be received into this church having met the requirements of these By-Laws in Section 1 and 2.
2. LETTER — Any person desiring to unite with this church, upon letter of recommendation from another church of like faith and order, shall present such letter to the church and be received into this church having met the requirements of these By-Laws in Section 1 and 2.
3. RESTORATION — Any person who has been excluded from the church due to church discipline, shall become a member only after:
 - o The candidate has demonstrated evidence of repentance (and possibly, a true profession of faith) to the pastors and the congregation. If the pastors discern to the best of their ability that the change of heart is genuine, the candidate will then be submitted for restoration by congregational vote. The vote must be 75% in favor of restoration. The membership process for new members is not required for those coming by restoration.

Section 4: Forms of Membership

1. REGULAR — All who are received into the membership of the church based shall be considered members in good standing until such status is changed by one of the conditions set forth in Article 4, Section 5.
2. OTHER — Members who are invalids, shut-ins, students, military, missionaries, or are unable to attend for acceptable reasons, as considered acceptable on a case-by-case basis by the pastors, will remain members and will be offered extended care ministry to ensure these members are ministered to in their absence.

Section 5: Termination of Membership

A member may be removed from the membership of Providence Baptist Church by:

1. DISMISSAL — At the recommendation of the pastors and the approval of the congregation, letters of dismissal shall be granted to members who apply for them in writing, provided they are in good standing and not subject to or already under corrective discipline at the time of the application. When such letters have been granted, the relationship to this church shall be considered terminated.
2. EXCLUSION — If a member is habitually absent from the stated meetings of this church without just cause for over 2 months, is unwilling to resolve conflicts or settle differences in

a Scriptural manner, or requests severance of membership, he or she may be excluded from the membership at the discretion of the pastors, subject to the approval of the congregation.

3. TRANSFER — Letters of recommendation shall be granted upon the recommendation of the pastors and approval by the congregation to churches of like mind which request them, provided the member in question is in good standing and not subject to or already under discipline at the time of the application. When such letters have been granted, the relationship to this church shall be considered terminated. Letters of dismissal shall be forwarded and given only to other churches.
4. EXCOMMUNICATION — It is right and in harmony with the Scriptures for the congregation, upon recommendation of the pastors, to remove from this fellowship any person who persists in holding false or heretical doctrine; or who obviously and persistently live inconsistently with his profession, unrepentant sin; or who persists in disturbing the unity and peace of this church (Matthew 10:15ff; 1 Corinthians 5:1ff; 2 Thessalonians 3:6,11,15; Romans 16:17).
5. DEATH — Upon the death of a member their membership will be automatically removed from the role.

Section 6: Denial of Membership:

If upon reviewing a person's request and desire for membership and the pastors determine that the applicant does not confess Jesus Christ as his or her Lord and Savior, or that there is a lack of evidence of a godly lifestyle, membership shall be denied. The decision shall be final and there shall be no appeal to any court about that decision. As our Lord would have us, the pastors shall seek to meet with that person concerning their spiritual state in hopes that God might perhaps grant them repentance and faith unto life eternal.

Section 7: Duties and Privileges of Membership

It is a great privilege to be saved by the grace of God, to be in Christ, and to be a part of the body of Christ. As Christians who are saved by grace, it is Scripture that instructs us as to those responsibilities that come with those privileges. Those include but are not limited to:

- Uniting in love with other believers in submission to the lordship of Christ in a local church (Colos2sians 3:16-17; Hebrews 10:24-25).
- Meeting together on a regular basis, especially The Lord's Day, fellowship, and times of corporate prayer.
- Devoting oneself to private devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ through daily systematic reading of the Bible, prayer, and regular family worship at home.
- Striving to influence their Christians who are married to unbelievers should strive to influence their homes for the glory of God by commending the gospel and demonstrating its power in their lives according to apostolic instructions (1 Corinthians 7:12–16 and 1 Peter 3:1–7).
- Working to extend and to proclaim the Gospel to the ends of the earth and to make disciples who will, in turn, make disciples (Matthew 28:18–20).
- Support the work of the Lord by systematic, proportionate, and sacrificial offerings of our time, talent, and treasure.
- It is the duty of every member to recognize that God gives to His church men to serve as spiritual leaders who give oversight to local congregations. These elders of the church are to be "esteemed very highly in love because of their work" (1 Thessalonians 5:12–13).

- Promote love, church unity, and devotion to one another as the Scripture commands, and to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Article 5

CHURCH DISCIPLINE

The Christian life is a life of discipleship, which means that it is to be characterized by godly discipline. This includes self-discipline which involves training oneself for godliness (1 Timothy 4:7) as well as the corporate discipline that comes through being united to a local church. Church discipline is both formative and corrective.

Section 1: Formative Discipline

Formative church discipline comes through the teaching of God's Word, the example of Christian living, and the mutual ministry of every member of the body of Christ. It has as its goal the instruction of disciples, the transformation of their lives, and their edification in love (Ephesians 4:11–13; Romans 12:1–16; 1 Corinthians 12:4–27). Formative discipline has a sanctifying influence. Every member should be satisfied with his/her God-given ministry, and thus we shall all grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Peter 4:7–12). Formative discipline utilizes the gifts and talents of each member, whether young or old, for the edification of all.

As members of this church, we recognize our obligation to honor, serve, worship, praise and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ in all that we say and do (1 Corinthians 10:31). Jesus Christ is the head of the church and, therefore, its Lord and Lawgiver (Ephesians 1:22; Isaiah 33:22). Those who truly love Him will endeavor to keep His commandments (John 14:15). In His Holy Word our Lord calls believers to perform certain duties toward one another. Some of these duties are listed in Article 4: Section 7.

When those duties and privileges are faithfully performed by every member, it will have a positive, formative effect upon the whole assembly. With the blessing of the Holy Spirit, we will all be enabled to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The following section is provided in the event of the failure of formative discipline as set forth above.

Section 2: Corrective Discipline

Corrective discipline is called for when any member is guilty of disorderly or divisive conduct, which is contrary to the church's standard of life, or is guilty of heretical doctrine based on the Word of God. Reasonable efforts shall be made through personal counsel and admonition to resolve difficulties, correct errors, and remove offenses before any further action is taken. Where possible all such communication should be face to face.

When individual and private counsel and admonition have failed, the matter must be brought to the attention of the pastors, who will then shepherd the process according to the instructions of God's Word (Matthew 5:23,24; 18:15–18; 1 Corinthians 5; Titus 3:10-11).

Section 3: The Goal of Church Discipline

1. The repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined (Hebrews 12:1–11; Matthew 18:15–17; 1 Corinthians 5:5; Galatians 6:1);
2. The instruction in righteousness and welfare of other Christians, as an example to them (1 Corinthians 5:11; 1 Timothy 5:20; Hebrews 10:24–25);
3. The purity of the church as a whole (1 Corinthians 5:6–7; Ephesians 5:27; Revelation 21:2);
4. The good of our corporate witness to non-Christians (Matthew 5:13–16; John 13:35; Acts 5:10–14); and
5. And supremely the glory of God which is manifested when His holy character is reflected to the watching world (Deuteronomy 5:11; John 15:8; Ephesians 1:4; 1 Peter 2:12).

Section 4: The Steps of Church Discipline

As each case of formal discipline is unique, a rigid protocol is unwise and untenable. Pastors are charged with the care and protection of the congregation (John 10:11–13; Acts 20:28; Titus 1:10–14) and with the exercise of discernment in matters regarding oversight, therefore, pastoral discretion will determine the specific protocol for each particular case of church discipline. An outline from the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17 is as follows:

1. If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother.
2. If he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, so that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses.
3. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church.
4. If he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

In extraordinary circumstances, at the discretion of the pastors, a matter may be taken directly to the church, according to the apostolic instruction of 1 Corinthians 5 and Titus 3:10–11.

Section 5: Elements of Corrective Discipline

1. **SUSPENSION** — If a member has publicly sinned, but shows hopeful signs of repentance, including submission to the admonitions of church officers, then severe discipline, such as excommunication, would be improper. Nevertheless, serious offenses may not be overlooked altogether, lest God’s enemies multiply their blasphemies, lest other saints be emboldened to sin, and lest the offender is harmed by a failure to test his own soul and appreciate the gravity of his offense. Therefore, at the discretion of the pastors, less severe terms may be imposed upon a member—such as public rebuke, or suspension of membership. The latter consists of a temporary suspension of the right to attend the Lord’s Table, to serve publicly in the church or vote in congregational meetings. Those who submit to such discipline and show signs of repentance are to be wholly forgiven and received as brethren. All such actions shall be reported to the congregation.

2. **EXCLUSION** — If a member is habitually absent for 2 months from the stated meetings of this church without just cause or is unwilling to resolve conflicts or settle differences in a Scriptural manner, or requests severance of membership, he or she may be excluded from the membership at the recommendation of the elders and vote of the congregation.
3. **EXCOMMUNICATION** – The most serious step a church can take in corrective discipline is to remove a member because of unrepentant sin. In extraordinary situations when a member has sinned publicly, scandalously, or divisively and without biblical repentance (2 Corinthians 7:8–12), the pastors shall call upon the church to excommunicate that member immediately (1 Corinthians 5:4–5; Titus 3:10–11). In other situations that call for corrective discipline, when restoration is not secured by the processes required in Matthew 18:15–18, further steps must be taken to correct offenders. Written charges shall be given to the accused offender by registered mail. If he requests a hearing with the pastors, the pastors shall meet with the accused, unless the person refuses to appear. After a fair and impartial hearing of all the witnesses accessible, and all facts ascertainable, the pastors must form a judgment. If they believe the accused to be guilty and deserving of severe biblical discipline, they shall make a recommendation that the offender be excommunicated by the congregation. The congregation shall have the right to excommunicate a member by a three fourths majority of the members present and voting. The vote will be taken by a show of hands or by standing. Excommunication always has as its end the glory of God, the purity of the body of Christ and the restoration of the offending party.
4. **RESTORATION** — It is the joyful duty of the church to forgive and restore to membership those persons who give satisfactory evidence of being repentant (2 Corinthians 2:6–8; 7:11). The pastors shall meet with and seek the restoration of those who have been excluded or suspended when they (the pastors) have judged that the aims of the discipline have been accomplished. Such action is to be reported to the church. Upon recommendation of the pastors the congregation shall have the right to restore an excommunicated person by a three fourths majority vote of the members present and voting at a congregational meeting.

Section 6: Instructions for the Congregation in Cases of Church Discipline

In cases where a person's sin is publicly known, immediate congregational disclosure may be required in order to protect the congregation and the reputation of the church. Also, in certain cases of sin, the elders may determine it necessary to notify civil authorities for the sake of protecting the weak (Romans 13:1-7; Proverbs 31:8-9). In case of certain sins, the person who is disciplined may not be allowed back into the congregation for the safety of the congregation as a whole or individuals within the congregation.

Every step in the discipline process should be undertaken with great humility, great prayer, and great love in the hope that the errant brother or sister may be restored. Congregational and individual relationships with an excommunicated member should be governed by scripture and conscience. This does not require shunning but may include biblical disassociation (1 Corinthians 5:2, 9-13; Matthew 18:17). The principle of disassociation requires Christians to separate themselves from those who claim to be believers, but persist in known, unrepentant sin – particularly of a gross or public nature. To “disassociate” means to disunite, disconnect, and not keep close company with such a one, except

in our prayers and in order to pursue him with the gospel as an unbeliever. In biblical terms, the excommunicated member is viewed and treated as a sinner in need of the gospel, but not as a brother.

An excommunicated member, as part of his removal, may be prohibited from some or all church functions (on or off campus, including worship), if he is perceived to present a threat, in word or action, to the safety or purity of the congregation.

The pastors, in harmony with Holy Scripture, will be the sole arbiters of the means of investigation, examination and disclosure of information to the congregation and its members. The congregation holds exclusively the power of excommunication (Matthew 16:19). Members under church discipline, or who are removed as a matter of church discipline, will submit to the determinations of the pastors and congregation, and agree to refrain from any form of civil legal action against the Church, its leaders or other members (1 Corinthians 6:1-11) regarding any portion of the discipline process.

ARTICLE 6 CHURCH OFFICERS

Section 1: The Appointment of Officers

Jesus Christ alone is the head of His church. However, as head, He has ordained that individual churches should be blessed with the spiritual rule and ministry of special office bearers. Therefore, it is the duty of the church to seek to discover from among members in good standing those men to whom Christ the Lord has imparted the necessary gifts for office bearing. Much prayer, both individual and corporate, should be an integral part of the process of appointing pastors/elders and deacons. The Lord's appointment is recognized by not only the inward conviction of the individual involved, but also by the approval of the church observing the possession of those gifts and graces required, and by Scriptural definition of the office.

Because it is always the desire of the congregation to come to one mind regarding those who should be appointed to serve as office bearers in the church, no less than nine tenths of all votes cast shall be required for the election of an officer. (See "Elections" — Article 2 of By-Laws.) Elders/Pastors are ordained by Christ to lead in the administration of local churches (Philippians 1:1; Acts 6:1-7; 14:23). Deacons are appointed to care for the temporal needs of the congregation.

Section 2: Eldership/Pastorate

The elders/pastors shall be comprised of men who satisfy the qualifications for the office of elder set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. No elder/pastor shall hold the office of deacon during his tenure. Subject to the will of the congregation, the elders/pastors shall oversee the ministry and resources of the church. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1-6 and 1 Peter 5:1-4, the elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God's flock. This includes maintaining an accurate church role. The church shall recognize men gifted and willing to serve in this calling, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections.

These men shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as elders/pastors. This recognition shall be reaffirmed by the church after 3 years. After an elder/pastor, other than the senior pastor/elder, has served two terms, he may only be elected to the office of elder/pastor after at least one year off. An elder/pastor's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal.

Section 3: Elders/Pastors Responsibilities

The elders/pastors shall take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members, examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions, oversee the work of the deacons and appointed church committees, conduct worship services, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, equip the membership for the work of the ministry, encourage sound doctrine and practice, admonish and correct error, oversee the process of church discipline, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church, and mobilize the church for world missions. The elders/pastors are further to ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, share our essential convictions. The elders/pastors may establish ministry positions or committees to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. The elder/pastors may also propose funding for new paid staff positions. The membership shall approve all candidates to fill the positions of senior pastor. The scope and approval of job descriptions for any staff position shall reside in the hands of those with hiring authority for that position.

The elders/pastors shall have primary responsibility for the supervision and evaluation of staff members. This responsibility may, on a case-by-case basis, be delegated to another staff member. In addition, the elders/pastors shall have primary responsibility for the employment and dismissal of all non-pastoral staff members. In view of the fact that the responsibilities of the eldership/pastorship are numerous and great, Scripture makes provision for the financial support of elders/pastors. 1 Timothy 5:17 encourages the support of "elders who rule well" (oversight) but "especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching." The senior pastor/elder shall serve as the chairman of elders' meetings members meetings. In the absence of the senior pastor, other elders/pastors may serve as chairman of elder/pastors' meetings and members and meetings. In compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the State of Oklahoma, the elders/pastors shall appoint men in good standing to serve as the officers of the corporation.

Section 4: The Senior Pastor

The senior pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder described in Section 3, above, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the ministry of preaching and teaching. His call shall not be subject to reaffirmation or to the term limitation set out in Section 2 above for elders. His call shall be defined as per Article 6, Section 3 of By-Laws. He shall preach on the Lord's Day, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, and perform such other duties as usually pertain to that office, or as set forth in the constitution. In the absence or incapacity of the senior pastor the elders shall assume responsibility for his duties, any of which can be delegated. If at any time the senior pastor shall make application to be released from his office, or if the congregation shall choose by a nine tenths majority vote to dismiss him, the relationship between the senior pastor and church may be terminated by the congregation in ninety days from the date of

notice of intention, or in a shorter period of time, if it is mutually agreed upon. The senior pastor's position will be a paid position, and full-time if the budget permits.

Section 5: Lay Elders/Pastors

The church may call additional pastors whose relationship to the senior pastor and associate pastor(s) is that of a lay elder (i.e., a non-salary position). A lay elder shall perform the duties of an elder and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching. He shall assist the senior pastor and other elders in the performance of their regular duties and shall perform any other duties as usually pertain to the office of pastor. When called upon to preach, the church should seek to compensate the lay elder monetarily for his labor of teaching and preaching the word (1 Timothy 5:17). The amount should be determined by the church Treasurer and other elders.

Section 6: The Absence of a Plurality of Elders/Pastors

In the case where there is an absence of a plurality of elders/pastors, the senior pastor shall appoint up to 2 men who are mature in the faith and spiritually qualified to assist him in ministry. These men shall assist the senior elder/pastor in major decisions and with overseeing church discipline should a situation arise.

Section 7: Deacons

The office of deacon is described in 1 Timothy 3:8–13 and Acts 6:1–7. The church shall recognize, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections, men who are giving of themselves in service to the church, and who possess particular gifts of service. These members shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as deacons. They shall be elected to one term lasting for a maximum of four years. Afterward they may be reaffirmed by the congregation for another 3-year term. After this second 3-year term, they may only be elected to another term after one year off. Deacons shall care for the temporal needs of members, preserve unity, attend to the accommodations for public worship, and encourage and support those able to help others and those with gifts of administration. The deacons are responsible for the disbursement of funds received by the church for benevolent needs. The deacons shall assist the church in maintaining a fund for benevolence, reporting on its use to the pastors/elders at their request, and reporting to the church its total receipts and total disbursements only.

ARTICLE 7 ORDINATIONS

Section 1: Ministers of the Gospel

It is our hope that Spirit-filled men will be called out from among us to proclaim the Gospel of the Grace of God. The church will commission such men by ordination to the ministry.

When there is a prospective candidate for ordination to the ministry, the elders shall guide that person in his studies and preparation. They shall then call a council to examine the qualifications of the candidate. It shall look into the soundness of his conversion, the godliness of his walk, the soundness of his doctrine, the degree of his gifts, the extent of his

training, and the blessing of God upon his labors for Christ. The council shall be made up of members of the congregation and other elders appointed by the senior pastor/elder.

If the council heartily recommends that the candidate be ordained, the church may give the recommended commission by a three-fourths majority of the members present and voting at a congregational meeting called by the senior pastor.

The elders and congregation shall have the power to exercise discipline, even to the revocation of this church's ordination to ministry in cases where the minister of the gospel has been disqualified, deemed unfit to serve in that capacity in accordance with Scripture, or has come under church discipline.

Section 2: Installation of Elders

In a regular worship service of the church, the Pastor shall question newly elected elders as follows:

A. Do you believe the Scriptures as written in the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and do you accept them as the only infallible rule of faith and practice, promising to live wholly under their authority?

B. Have you personally adopted, and will you cheerfully submit to and defend God's Holy Word and the Beliefs of this Church, abide by our Constitution and By-Laws of this church, and promise to carry out your responsibilities in accordance with these guiding documents?

C. Do you accept the Office of Elder readily, and do you promise to perform its duties of caring for the flock of God in the fear of His Name?

Then the hands of the existing elders shall be placed on the heads of the new elders and prayer offered in their behalf. Following this, the people shall be exhorted to esteem and obey those whom God has placed over them.

Section 3: Installation of Deacons

In a regular worship of the church, the Pastor shall question newly elected deacons as follows:

A. Do you believe the Scriptures as written in the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and do you accept them as the only infallible rule of faith and practice, promising to live wholly under their authority?

B. Have you personally adopted, and will you cheerfully submit to the word of God, the beliefs of this church, the Constitution and By-Laws of this church, and promise to carry out your responsibilities in accordance with these guiding documents?

C. Do you accept the Office of Deacon, and do you promise to care for the poor and needy, to manage the business of this church in the fear of God, and to work for the unity of this church in full cooperation with the elders?

Then the hands of the pastors/elders and deacons shall be placed on the heads of the new deacons and prayer offered in their behalf. Following this, the people shall be exhorted to esteem and obey those whom God has placed over them.

ARTICLE 8

Section 1: Finances

The work of this church is financially dependent upon the voluntary gifts of God's people. The elders/pastors, in conjunction with the finance committee, if appointed, and the Treasurer of this church, shall be responsible for the orderly administration of the annual budget and all

financial disbursements and receipts. Before the annual members meeting in December, the elders shall work in conjunction with the finance committee to prepare a budget that will finance the mission and ministries of the church. When this budget is approved by a two-thirds vote of the congregation, it shall be considered the basis for the current liabilities. No adjustments are to be made to the budget that exceeds 2% of the annual budget without the consent of the congregation.

The fiscal year of the church shall begin January first and end December thirty-first.

Article 9

Section 1: Members Meetings

The annual congregational meeting will be held within the first 2 Sundays of December to prepare for the new fiscal year. The elders/pastors may call for a special meeting throughout the year should the need arise. The meeting must be announced to the congregation two weeks prior to when it is held.

ARTICLE 10

Section: 1 Amendments

Amendments to the Constitution may be adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a congregational meeting, provided that such amendments have been distributed by the officers in written form at least two weeks prior to the congregational meeting.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE 1:

CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Section 1: Notice of Meetings

Notice of all congregational meetings shall be given at regular worship services on the two successive Sundays immediately prior to the meeting. In an emergency, a meeting may be called on shorter notice by trying to notify each member of the time, place, and purpose of the congregational meeting.

Section 2: Number of Meetings

Congregational meetings shall be held once a year, within the first two weeks of December, for the reception of reports and the transaction of such other business as may properly be brought before the meeting. The adoption of a budget shall take place at the members' meeting in December. Special meetings shall be called by the elders when important decisions need to be made throughout the year or in emergency situations.

Section 3: Method of Calling Meetings

It shall be the right and responsibility of the elders to call all congregational meetings. A written request to call a special congregational meeting may be submitted by the members and decided upon by the elders. When special congregational meetings are called, there must be notice given to the congregation as to the purpose.

Section 4: Responsibility for Meetings

The elders shall arrange the details of all congregational meetings and see that all possible preparation for their successful conduct is made. All meetings of Providence Baptist Church shall follow an orderly outline to avoid chaos. The chairman of each meeting shall see that minutes are recorded for each meeting. The senior pastor shall be charge with leading the meetings and shall terminate them at his discretion.

Section 5: Quorum for Transaction of Business

The voting members present at any constitutionally called congregational meeting shall be considered a quorum for the transaction of business. All church officers shall be voted upon by written ballot.

Section 6: Voting Age

Any member of the church eighteen years of age or over, in good and regular standing, shall have the right to vote on any question properly brought before the congregation.

ARTICLE 2

APPOINTMENTS

Section 1: Principles

The process for church elections shall be interpreted and carried out to fulfill the following principles: Substantial prayer, both individually and corporately, should be an integral part of the appointment process; Nominations should proceed with the support of the elders/pastors; All candidates for church office should be treated with the grace, kindness, and honesty appropriate in evaluating fellow members; The appointment process shall express that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration that is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 2: Selection of Officers

The appointment of officers shall be held at a members' meeting of the church. Names of nominees to serve as elders/pastors or deacons shall be presented by the elders/pastors to be voted on shall be brought to the congregation 4 weeks prior to the vote. If there are no concerns and the elders believe the person has met all the qualifications necessary to serve, the decision will be brought to the congregation to be voted on. The meeting to appoint an elder/pastor or deacon should be announced two weeks prior to the meeting. The elders/pastors should seek recommendations and involvement from the general membership in the nomination process. Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified for an office should express such concern to the elders/pastors. Members who cannot in good conscience affirm a candidate should express their objection to the elders/pastors as far in advance as possible before the relevant church members' meeting. The moderator shall declare appointed all men receiving no less than nine-tenths of all votes cast for the office of elder or deacon; abstentions will not be considered as votes cast. The persons appointed shall assume their respective offices upon appointment unless another date has been specifically designated.

Section 3: Calling of the Senior Pastor

In the calling of any man to this position, the same basic process of calling an elder must be followed. In addition, however, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of

any potential senior pastor and, before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance from the elders that, having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Word of God and this church's beliefs. Notice of the nomination of a man to be appointed to membership and called as senior pastor must be given at two Sunday morning services following the nomination, prior to the vote at a members' meeting.

Section 4: Calling of Lay Elders/Pastors

In the calling of any man to the position of a lay elder/pastor, the same basic process of calling an elder/pastor must be followed. In addition, however, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential elder/pastor and, before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance from the elders that, having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the beliefs of this church. Notice of the nomination of a man to be called as elder/pastor must be given at two Sunday morning services, prior to the vote at a members' meeting.

Article 3

CLERK AND TREASURER

Section 1: Duties of the Church Clerk

The Clerk shall keep a record of all business transacted at the various meetings of the church, keep an accurate record of the membership. The Clerk shall be annually appointed by the elders/pastors and voted on by the congregation.

Section 2: Duties of the Church Treasurer

The church Treasurer is to be responsible for the keeping of an accurate financial record of all funds identified with the church, reconciling monthly statements, monitoring and safeguarding church accounts, attending to any filings required by the Internal Revenue Service, as well as maintaining records of individual contributions. The Treasurer shall be recommended by the elders/pastors and voted on by the congregation. With a two-thirds vote candidates to the office of Treasurer must consist of either:

1. A member in good standing possessing abilities in financial stewardship and accounting practices, willing to voluntarily serve in this position.
2. A paid Certified Public Accountant to handle or oversee the proper discharge of all the above referenced duties.

The Treasurer shall work with and report to the elders and Finance Committee if formed by the church. An assistant Treasurer may be appointed to assist in these duties. The Treasurer shall ensure that a financial audit is conducted at least every 5 years by a certified public accountant.

ARTICLE 4

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee shall be comprised of the pastors/elders, deacons, and up to 3 additional members who are appointed by elders/pastors. Their duties include working with the elders to prepare and recommend to the congregation an annual budget to be voted on.

ARTICLE 5

Church Corporation

In compliance with the laws of the State of Oklahoma for Corporations Not for Profit, this church shall have at least 3 people to serve as trustees of the corporation. There shall be a President, a Clerk, and a Treasurer for purposes of carrying out their required services.

ARTICLE 6

Amendments

Amendments to the By-Laws may be adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a congregational meeting, provided that such amendments have been distributed by the elders/pastors in written form at least two weeks prior to the congregational meeting.