

**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**

**OF**

**BAYVIEW BAPTIST CHURCH**

**707 E. BAYVIEW BLVD.  
NORFOLK, VA 23503**



*Proclaiming the Gospel in word and deed*

# CONSTITUTION

## Preamble

We establish this constitution to declare and preserve the principles of our faith, and to govern this church in an orderly manner.

## Article One Name

This body shall be known as Bayview Baptist Church of Norfolk, Virginia, located at 707 E. Bayview Boulevard.

## Article Two Mission/Vision/Core Values

- I. Mission  
Our mission is to glorify God (1 Cor. 10:31), live the Great Commandments (Matt. 22:36-40) and fulfill the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20).
- II. Vision  
Our vision is to be a life-giving community of loving relationships that proclaims the Gospel in word and deed.
- III. Core Values
  - a. We value personal, loving, growing relationships with God and people. (John 1:12, Philippians 3:10, Matt. 22:38-40, John 13:34-35)
  - b. We value godly servant leadership. We believe that biblical leadership is best expressed through serving people. (Mark 10:45, Luke 22:25-27, Galatians 5:13)
  - c. We value the Bible. It is the standard by which we evaluate all teaching, preaching and personal behavior. (1 Timothy 3:16, Joshua 1:8, Psalm 119:10-11)
  - d. We value prayer. We believe God communicates and accomplishes His purposes through the individual and corporate prayers of His people. (2 Chronicles 7:14, Matthew 6:9-13, John 16:24)
  - e. We value whole-hearted, Spirit-led worship of God the Father and His son Jesus Christ. (Psalm 2:11-12, Psalm 99:5, Psalm 100, John 4:24, Luke 4:8)
  - f. We value the ministry of the Holy Spirit. We believe that the Holy Spirit works through individual believers as they obediently exercise their spiritual gifts by faith. (1 Corinthians 12:7-11, 1 Peter 4:10, Romans 12:6-8)

**Article Three**  
**Statement of Faith**

*We have adopted the Baptist Faith and Message of 2000 as our statement of beliefs.*

**I. The Scriptures**

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. 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. God**

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.

**A. God the Father**

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.*

## **B. God the Son**

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, fully God, fully 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; 53; 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.*

## **C. God the Holy Spirit**

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 Saviour, 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.*

### **III. Man**

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

*Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.*

### **IV. Salvation**

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace.

Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

*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.*

## **V. God's Purpose of Grace**

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

*Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.*

## **VI. The Church**

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

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.

*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.*

## **VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

*Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.*

## **VIII. The Lord's Day**

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

*Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.*

## **IX. The Kingdom**

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

*Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.*

## **X. Last Things**

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

*Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.*

## **XI. Evangelism and Missions**

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.*

## **XII. Education**

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these

the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

*Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.*

### **XIII. Stewardship**

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They 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.*

### **XIV. Cooperation**

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. 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, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

*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.*

## **XV. The Christian and the Social Order**

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

*Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1 Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.*

## **XVI. Peace and War**

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

*Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9,38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36,38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.*

## **XVII. Religious Liberty**

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. 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 the 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.

*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.*

### **XVIII. The Family**

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

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; 127; 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.*

**Article Four**  
**Membership Covenant**

By the grace of God I have been led to repent of my sin and believe in Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. Now, being in agreement with the mission, vision, core values, and statement of faith, I feel led by the Holy Spirit to joyfully and solemnly unite in holy covenant with the Bayview Baptist Church family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members in the following ways:

1. To protect the unity of Bayview Baptist Church by:
  - a. Accepting the Scripture as the final authority and engaging to walk together in Christian love through the power of the Holy Spirit.
  - b. Refusing to gossip, malign, or attack one another.
  - c. Endeavoring after unity of mind in doctrine.
  - d. Following the leadership of the Holy Spirit and ordained church leaders.
2. To share responsibility in Bayview Baptist Church by:
  - a. Praying for church growth and maturity.
  - b. Inviting the unchurched to attend.
  - c. Warmly welcoming all visitors.
3. To serve in the ministry of Bayview Baptist Church by:
  - a. Discovering and using my spiritual gifts and talents for the common good.
  - b. Being equipped to serve the body of Christ as called.
  - c. Serving in at least one ministry capacity a year.
  - d. Fervently seeking the salvation of my family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, acquaintances, and of all the world.
4. To seek to build community at Bayview Baptist Church by:
  - a. Participating in a small group or Sunday School class.
  - b. Developing genuine and sincere relationships with one another.
  - c. Resolving to practice personal and family worship and to train my children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.
  - d. Being slow to take offense, always eager to seek the reconciliation Christ commands, and continually working to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
5. To commit to grow as a disciple of Jesus Christ by:
  - a. Seeking discipleship by another mature believer.
  - b. Discipling a new Christian personally or being involved in a small group in which I contribute to the spiritual growth of others.
  - c. Watching over one another in brotherly love, remembering one another in prayer, helping one another in sickness and distress, and cultivating Christian compassion and courtesy.

- d. Submitting to the church's discipline upon myself and lovingly assuming my responsibility to participate in the discipline of other members, as taught in Scripture.
6. To support the testimony of Bayview Baptist Church by:
- a. Faithfully attending the church's meetings for worship, prayer, study, and fellowship unless providentially hindered.
  - b. Striving by God's grace and power to live as Christ in the world.
  - c. Being just and honest in my dealings and faithful in my responsibilities and commitments.
  - d. Contributing cheerfully and regularly to this church for its general ministry and expenses, the relief of the poor, the cause of reformation and revival, and the spread of the Gospel throughout all nations.

### Article Five

#### **The Government of Our Church**

I. Polity

The government of this church is vested in its members who democratically elect elders to manage, administrate and minister to the church body. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Southern Baptist churches. Insofar as practical, this church will cooperate with and support the association and state convention affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

II. Doctrine

The church acknowledges the 39 books of the Old Testament and 27 books of the New Testament as its only authority in matters of faith and practice. Its understanding of Christian truth as contained therein is in essential accord with the belief of Southern Baptist churches as indicated in the Statement of Faith.

### Article Six

#### **Adhering to Principles**

If at any time the majority of this church shall depart from the principles herein stated and embodied in the membership covenant and statement of faith, the property of this church shall belong to the minority, however small, who adhere to the principles thus set forth.

**Article Seven**  
**Amendments**

No change may be made in this constitution which will affect the doctrine of the church, the requirements for membership, or the relationship of this church in its cooperative efforts with churches of like faith and order.

## **BYLAWS**

### **Article 1** **Membership**

#### **SECTION 1. MEMBERS**

All members of this Church shall consist of individuals who have confessed Jesus Christ publicly as Savior and Lord and have followed Him in believer's baptism by immersion.

#### **SECTION 2. RECEPTION OF MEMBERS**

- (1) By baptism: Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and desiring membership with this Church shall be received as a candidate for baptism.
- (2) By letter: Any person who has membership in a church of like faith and practice and desires to unite with this church, shall be received on the promise of a letter of transfer of membership.
- (3) By statement: Any person desiring to unite with this church, who for particular reasons is unable to provide a transfer of letter, shall be received by a verbal profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and an acceptance of the membership covenant, constitution and articles of faith.

Any person who meets one of the aforementioned criteria shall be interviewed by one elder and one deacon/ness. The purpose of this interview will be to ensure that the person desiring membership understands his or her Christian commitment, the membership covenant, church constitution and articles of faith. If the elders determine that the person desiring membership understands the aforementioned, they will ask the prospective member to sign a copy of the membership covenant. The interviewers will give the new member a copy of the constitution and a copy of the membership covenant.

After completing the membership interview, people received for membership by baptism, letter or statement shall come under the care of the church. They will be introduced to the church the next Sunday during the worship service. New Christians and those desiring or needing a refresher course in basic Christian discipleship will be enrolled in the discipleship and mentoring ministry of the church.

#### **SECTION 3. DUTIES OF MEMBERS**

- (1) The duties of the members in this church are outlined in the New Testament and expressed in our membership covenant. Members are required to resolve any disputes among themselves peaceably and in harmony with Scripture. (See Article I, Section 4)

- (2) Members who are fifteen years old or older, and who have signed and adhere to the membership covenant will have voting privileges at congregational meetings.
- (3) Members who do not wish to sign the membership covenant will not have voting privileges at congregational meetings.

#### SECTION 4. DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

The purpose of church discipline is the restoration of the erring member to a biblical standard of conduct and doctrine (Gal. 6:1), to maintain purity in the church (1 Cor. 5:6) and to deter sin (1 Tim. 5:20).

Any member of this church who teaches or insists on holding false doctrine (heresy), who consistently conducts himself or herself in a manner that is a clear violation of biblical teaching, or who persists in disturbing the unity or peace of the church will be addressed according to the steps of discipline listed below.

Heresy is further defined as a deliberate denial of revealed truth coupled with an acceptance of error. Charges of heresy will be examined by the elders in accordance with the Scripture and the Baptist Faith and Message of 2000.

##### Steps of Discipline (Matt. 18:15-17)

- (1) Private confrontation: It is the duty of any member of this church who has knowledge of an erring member's misconduct or heresy to gently warn and correct the erring member in private, seeking his or her repentance and restoration.
- (2) Private conference: If the erring member does not heed this warning and repent, the concerned member shall again go to the erring member accompanied by one or two other members as witnesses to gently warn and correct, seeking repentance and restoration.
- (3) Public meeting: If the erring member still refuses to heed the warning and repent, the matter shall be brought to the attention of the elders. The elders will prayerfully and carefully investigate the error or heresy in accordance with the Scripture and article 3 of the constitution. If the elders determine that the erring member is guilty and remains unrepentant after being given ample evidence, warning, and time to repent, the elders shall tell it to the church encouraging the congregation to pray for the repentance and restoration of the erring member.
- (4) Public exclusion: If the erring member refuses to heed the warnings of the elders and the church, he or she shall be dismissed from the church in accordance with the Scriptures. The erring member will be asked to stay away from any church activity. There shall be no appeal of the discipline process or the dismissal to any

court. The congregation will be encouraged to pray for the repentance and restoration of the erring member.

- (5) At some time in the future if the erring member gives satisfactory evidence of repentance to the elders, he or she will be restored to full membership and fellowship in the church.

It is clearly understood that the discipline process will continue to conclusion whether the erring member leaves the church or otherwise seeks to withdraw from membership.

#### SECTION 5. DISMISSAL OF MEMBERS

- (1) By physical death.
- (2) By transfer of letter: when application is made for a transfer of letter to join a church of like faith and practice by members in good standing, it shall be granted. No such letter may be given to a member who is at the time under the corrective discipline of the church. The church shall be informed at the next congregational meeting of all requests for transfer of letter. All letters shall, in every instance, be addressed to the Pastor or clerk of the church with which the member expects to unite. Church letters are not individual property, but simply recommendations from one church to another.
- (3) By exclusion: If a member habitually absents himself or herself from the stated meetings of the church without valid reason (i.e., six months or longer), or if due to relocation he or she ceases to maintain a vital contact with the church, he or she may be excluded from membership. If an excluded member applies again for membership, the procedures set forth in Sections 1 and 2 of this article will be followed.
- (4) By dismissal as a final step of church discipline.

#### SECTION 6. DEDICATION OF CHILDREN

Parents who are members of this church desiring to publicly acknowledge their child as a gift from God may have their child dedicated at a service to be held at the discretion of the pastor. This service will also serve as a pledge on the part of the parents to bring up the child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord and as a pledge on the part of the congregation to support the parents in that task. The service may consist of an appropriate reading from Scripture, remarks by the pastor, and a prayer of dedication. This service is in no way to be construed as infant baptism or any other rite.

**Article 2**  
**Church Officers**

**SECTION 1. PASTOR/LEADING ELDER**

**A. Installation in Office**

A pastor/leading elder shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. His election shall take place at a special called congregational meeting. The congregation will be given at least one week's notice of the meeting.

**B. Responsibilities**

1. The pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. He will lead the congregation, the organization, church staff and elders to perform their tasks.

2. The pastor is leader of the pastoral ministries in the church. As such he works with the elders, deacons/esses and church staff to (1) proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers, (2) lead the church to engage in a fellowship of worship, witness, education, ministry and application, (3) lead the church in performing its tasks, and (4) care for the church's members and other persons in the community.

3. The pastor shall have the privilege of serving as an official member of all organizations and committees and preside as moderator over all congregational meetings. The pastor is also an official member of the elder and deacon boards.

**C. Qualifications**

The pastor/leading elder will meet the qualifications of elders listed in section 2B. of this article.

**D. Dismissal**

1. Upon His Request:

The pastor shall serve until his ministry is terminated at his request, giving at least two weeks notice at the time of resignation.

2. Dismissal for Cause:

a. Any request from the church to terminate the pastor's ministry shall be thoroughly investigated by the elders in accordance with 1 Timothy 5:19-20.

b. If the elders find sufficient evidence and cause for dismissal, they will present a motion to the congregation for the pastor's dismissal at a special called congregational meeting. A three-fourth (3/4) majority of voting members present shall be necessary for the pastor's dismissal.

c. If the elders do not find cause for dismissal, they will give the offended member an option of bringing the matter before the congregation at a special called congregational meeting. The offended member will present

his or her grievance before the congregation. The elders will present their findings to the congregation advising the congregation that they do not find cause for the pastor's dismissal. After both sides are presented, a vote will be taken. A three-fourth (3/4) majority of voting members present must agree with the offended member in order for the pastor's to be dismissed.

d. If a three-fourth (3/4) majority of voting members does not agree with the individual(s) bringing charges against the pastor, the individual(s) bringing charges against the pastor will be placed under censure. A censure requires the person under censure not to speak of the charges brought against the pastor to anyone in the church or outside the church, not to bring up the charges at a later congregational meeting, or to otherwise engage in behavior considered to be divisive. Members under censure who violate their censure will be placed under church discipline in accordance with Article 1, section 4 of the bylaws.

## SECTION 2. ELDERS

In accordance with the meaning of the word and the practice of the New Testament, elders are to be servant-leaders of the church. Elders serve with the pastor/leading elder and staff in performing the following responsibilities: governing, leading, ministering and carrying out the administrative functions of the church.

### A. Election

- (1) Elders are elected at regular congregational meetings or at special congregational meetings called for that purpose. Elections will be by secret ballot.
- (2) Elders shall be nominated by two methods. The first would allow each member to nominate up to five (5) persons guided by the belief that each nominee is qualified. Secondly, people who nominate themselves for the office of elder shall present themselves as candidates for election.
- (3) The persons nominated shall be screened for eligibility by the pastor and one other elder, by means of a personal home visit and interview.
- (4) After the screening process, the list of all eligible persons shall be distributed to the church members at a regular church service two weeks before the election takes place, in order for the church members to pray concerning the candidates they should vote for.
- (5) Elders shall be elected individually and must receive three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the members present. Voting will be by secret ballot.

- (6) There shall be no less than three, but no more than eleven elders. This number includes the pastor/leading elder. The board of elders will determine the number of vacancies to be filled during the next calendar year if any.
- (7) Each elder with the exception of the Pastor/Leading Elder is subject to a yearly confidence vote at the regular fall/winter congregational meeting. Elders must receive a majority of the eligible voters present to continue his term of office for the coming year. The vote will be by secret ballot.
- (8) The elder's term of office is for life or until he resigns, is mentally or physically incapable of performing his duties, or is dismissed as a member of the church in accordance with Article 1, section 5 of the bylaws.
- (9) Elders may go on an inactive list if they are not able to serve temporarily because of military duty or personal reasons.

#### B. Qualifications

- (1) Elders must be active members of the church and men 25 years old or older.
- (2) Biblical qualifications (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9)
  - i. Above reproach: Elders must lead by example and demonstrate a lifestyle free of patterns of sin.
  - ii. Husband of one wife: Elders, if married, must be devoted husbands. Divorced men may only be qualified if they were divorced on the grounds of adultery (Matt. 19:9) or willful desertion by an unbelieving spouse (1 Cor. 7:15).
  - iii. Sober-minded and Self-controlled: Elders must be self-controlled, enslaved to nothing, free from excesses. They must be sensible, wise, balanced in judgment, not given to quick superficial decisions based on immature thinking.
  - iv. Respectable: Elders must demonstrate a well-ordered life and honorable behavior.
  - v. Hospitable: Elders must be unselfish with their personal resources and time.
  - vi. Able to teach: Elders must be able to communicate truth and sound doctrine with gentleness.
  - vii. Elders must be free from addictions of any kind and willing to limit their liberty for the sake of others.
  - viii. Not quick-tempered: Elders must be gentle, patient, and able to exercise self-control in difficult situations.
  - ix. Uncontentious: Elders must not be given to quarrelling or selfish argumentation.

- x. Free from the love of money: Elders must not be stingy, greedy, or preoccupied with amassing material things.
- xi. Manage his own household: Elders must have a well-ordered household and a healthy family life.
- xii. Not a new convert: Elders must not be new believers. They must have been Christians long enough to demonstrate the reality of their conversion and the maturity of their spirituality.
- xiii. Good reputation with outsiders: Elders must be well respected by unbelievers and free from hypocrisy.
- xiv. Loving what is good: Elders must desire the will of God in every decision. Elders must desire to be fair and impartial. Their judgments must be based on scriptural principles.
- xv. Upright/Holy: Elders must be devoted Christ followers, seeking to be conformed to His image by the power of the Holy Spirit. They must be committed to prayer, worship, the study of Scripture, and guarding their own walk with Christ.
- xvi. Holding fast to the Word: Elders must be stable in faith, obedient to the Word of God, continually seeking to be filled (controlled) by the Holy Spirit.

(3) Ordination of elders shall be at the hands of the pastor and the elder board.

(4) Elders shall also be men:

- i. Who regularly attend church worship services and activities.
- ii. With a knowledge and interest in all church organizations.
- iii. In agreement, together with their wives (if married), with the church's statement of beliefs, mission, vision and core values.
- iv. In prayerful and active support of the ministry of this church.
- v. In agreement with the church as a cooperating Southern Baptist Church.
- vi. Who share in the financial program of the church as a tither.

### C. Responsibilities

- (1) Elders are servant leaders of the church.
- (2) Elders shall meet once a month and a quorum consisting of a majority of its members must be present in order to hold its meeting. The elders will make decisions under the leadership of the Holy Spirit through prayer and by a majority vote of the elder board.
- (3) The pastor/leading elder or someone he designates in his absence will preside over all meetings.
- (4) Elders shall hold the pastor/leading elder accountable for the proper conduct of all aspects of his ministry. They will prayerfully give him support, advice, correction and rebuke when necessary.
- (5) Elders who are gifted in the area of preaching and teaching may fill the pulpit in the pastor's absence or upon his request. Elders will also assist

the pastor in filling the pulpit in his absence should there be no elders available and able to fill the pulpit.

- (6) Along with the pastor/leading elder, the elders will oversee all church personnel issues. That is, they will oversee all administrative and ministry staff.
- (7) The pastor/leading elder will hire and fire all administrative personnel with the advice and consent of the elder board.
- (8) The elders will hire and fire all ministry staff personnel.
- (9) The elders will draft an annual church budget to be approved and adopted by the congregation at the fall/winter congregational meeting. Budget input will be solicited from the various ministry team leaders in the church.
- (10) Elders will execute and monitor the financial budget of the church. No more than six elders will be designated as check signers.
- (11) Twice yearly, at the Spring and Fall/Winter congregational meetings, the elders will give the congregation a budget update. Budget updates will be given more than twice a year if deemed necessary by the elders.
- (12) Elders shall oversee all ministry action team leaders for the proper conduct of their ministry. Elders will also ensure ministry team leaders operate in accordance with the church's statement of beliefs, mission, vision and core values. Elders will also monitor ministry action team leaders to ensure that they operate within budgetary parameters.
- (13) Elders shall hold the chairperson of the deacon board accountable for the proper conduct of the deacon ministry of the church. Elders will also ensure that the deacon board operates within budgetary parameters.
- (14) Elders shall oversee the proper maintenance and upkeep of the church building and property. They shall have the responsibility for developing plans for new construction, major maintenance and improvements of all church property. They are not empowered to incur contractual obligations for major maintenance projects or new construction without church approval.
- (15) The use of church facilities and grounds shall be approved by the elders.
- (16) Elders shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer property without a specific vote of the church authorizing such action.
- (17) Major adjustments and changes (amounts greater than \$1,000) to the budget that the elders deem necessary will be presented to the congregation for approval at a regular or special called congregational meeting.

### SECTION 3. CHURCH STAFF

The elders shall call or employ such staff members as the church shall need. A job description shall be written when the need for a staff member is determined. Ministry staff may include but not be limited to associate pastors, executive/administrative pastors, and ministers of education, music/worship and youth. Church administrative staff shall include but not be limited administrative assistants, bookkeeper, maintenance and custodial personnel. The ministry staff shall be under the general supervision of the leading elder, and their duties and compensation shall be specified by the elders and presented to the church for approval. This could be done at any regular congregational meeting, or any special congregational meeting called for this purpose. At least two weeks notice at the time of resignation of any church staff should be given.

### SECTION 4. DEACONS/DEACONESSES

In accordance with the meaning of the word and the practice of the New Testament, Deacons/esses shall be servants of the church. Their task is to serve with the pastor, elders and staff in performing pastoral ministry tasks: proclaiming the gospel to believers and unbelievers; caring for church members and other persons in the community; serving the church to achieve its mission.

#### A. Election

- (1) Deacons/esses shall be elected at regular congregational meetings or at special congregational meetings called for that purpose.
- (2) The deacons/esses shall be nominated by two methods. The first would allow each member to nominate up to five (5) persons guided by the belief that each nominee is qualified. The second would be by self nomination. People who nominate themselves for the office of deacon/ess and have successfully completed the eligibility screening process shall present themselves as candidates for election.
- (3) The persons nominated shall be screened for eligibility by an elder and chairperson of the deacon board, by means of a personal home visit and interview.
- (4) After the screening process, the list of all eligible persons shall be distributed to the church members at a regular church service two weeks before the election takes place, so that the church members can pray over the persons they should vote for.
- (5) Deacons/esses shall be elected individually and must receive three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the members present. Voting will be by secret ballot.
- (6) Ideally, there shall be one deacon/ess for every fifteen church families.
- (7) The term of office for deacons/esses is three years. Deacons/esses may serve consecutive terms until they are mentally or physically incapable of carrying out their ministry. However, each deacon/ess must be reelected at the end of three years in office.

- (8) Deacons/esses may go on an inactive list if they are not able to serve appropriately because of military duty or other personal reasons.

**B. Qualifications**

- (1) Deacons/esses shall be active members of the church for at least one year, men or women, over the age of 21.
- (2) Have the desire and gifting for pastoral, care-giving servant ministry.
- (3) Biblical Qualifications(Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:8-13):
  - i. Of good repute: Have a good reputation among believers and unbelievers in the community.
  - ii. Spirit filled and wise: they must be continually seeking the filling (control) of the Holy Spirit in their lives and wise in their decisions and conduct with others.
  - iii. Dignified/Not double-tongued: they must be respectable people who keep their word.
  - iv. They must be free from addictions of any kind and willing to limit their liberty for the sake of others.
  - v. Not greedy for dishonest gain: they must not be stingy, greedy, or preoccupied with amassing material things.
  - vi. Hold the mystery of faith with a clear conscience: they must be established in the faith, not having any significant doubts about their Christian walk.
  - vii. Tested first/blameless: they must have a proven track record of godly living and behavior as well as an inclination to serve people in the church and community.
  - viii. Spouses Dignified: If married, their spouses must be respectable people who are not slanderers. Their spouses must be sober in their thinking and faithful members of the congregation.
  - ix. One Spouse: If married, they must be devoted spouses. Divorced people may only be qualified if they were divorced on the grounds of adultery (Matt. 19:9) or willful desertion by an unbelieving spouse (1 Cor. 7:15).
  - x. Manage household well: must have a well-ordered household and a healthy family life.
- (4) Ordination of deacons/esses shall be at the hands of the pastor and elder board.
- (5) Deacons/esses shall be people who:
  - i. Who regularly attend church worship services and activities.
  - ii. With a knowledge and interest in all church organizations.
  - iii. In agreement, together with their spouses (if married), with the church's statement of beliefs, mission, vision and core values.
  - iv. In prayerful and active support of the ministry of this church.
  - v. In agreement with the church as a cooperating Southern Baptist Church.
  - vi. Who share in the financial program of the church as a tither.

### C. Responsibilities of Deacons/esses

- (1) Deacons/esses are servants of the church.
- (2) The deacons/esses shall meet once a month and a quorum consisting of a majority of its members must be present in order to vote.
- (3) The deacons/esses shall elect annually, at their October meeting, from among themselves, a chairperson, co chairperson and a secretary. The chairperson must be an active deacon/ess for at least one year.
- (4) The deacons/esses shall actively participate in the family ministry program. Each deacon/ess shall freely communicate with the elders and the pastor about all matters pertaining to possible church discipline. These matters shall be kept confidential.
- (5) The deacons/esses shall respond to such member of the church in need of financial assistance and coordinate with the elders to assist in their relief.
- (6) Deacons/esses shall operate within budgetary parameters. Annually, they shall provide a budget input to the elders.
- (7) Deacons/esses shall assist in the ordinance of baptism and the Lord's Supper. They will prepare and serve the Lord's Supper on the last Sunday of every month.
- (8) Deacons/esses shall regularly visit and have contact with the families under his or her care in order to ascertain their physical or spiritual needs. When needs are discovered, he or she will make these needs known to the deacon board. The deacon board will take action as required and as they are able to take action. Any needs brought to the attention of the deacon board that they cannot meet, will be brought to the attention of the elders. The elders will make a decision considering further church action regarding the need.

### SECTION 5. CHURCH CLERK

The clerk shall keep a record of all the actions of the church. He or she is responsible for keeping a register of the names of members, with dates of admission, dismissal, or death, together with a record of baptisms. He or she shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church. He or she shall preserve on file all communications and written official reports pertaining to congregational meetings. The church may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to the church administrative assistant. All church records are church property and should be filed in the church office, with backup electronic files.

### SECTION 6 TRUSTEES

Three church members shall be appointed as trustees by the pastor/leading elder, and duly approved by the appropriate court action, will hold in trust the church property and be responsible for the safekeeping of all legal documents. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without a specific vote of the church authorizing such action. It shall be the function of the trustees to affix their signatures to legal documents, involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property or other legal documents where the signatures of the Trustees are required. Trustees shall serve at the will and pleasure of the church.

## Article 3 **Ministry Action Teams**

### SECTION 1. GENERAL

All ministry action teams (MAT) of the church shall be under church control. Their officers must be active members of the church and appointed by the elders. Each MAT is under the supervision and oversight of the elder board.

The Bible shall be the basic text for all teaching. The purchase and use of Southern Baptist Literature and study materials for all MATs shall be the practice of this church. Other literature and study materials may be used, however, they must be approved by the elder board. Teachers are encouraged to use resource materials that are in harmony with the doctrinal position of the church in preparation of lessons or devotional comments.

### SECTION 2. DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRY ACTION TEAM

The Discipleship MAT will be under the direction of the Discipleship Pastor or a team leader appointed by the elders. The purpose of the Discipleship MAT is to promote and direct the discipleship and equipping ministry of the church. The team leader will enlist members of his or her MAT from the congregation. The Discipleship MAT will enlist and equip teachers for adult Sunday school classes, leaders for connecting groups and other small groups as needed.

### SECTION 3. OUTREACH AND EVANGELISM MINISTRY ACTION TEAM

The Outreach and Evangelism MAT will be under the direction of the Pastor of Evangelism and Outreach or a team leader appointed by the elders. The purpose of the Outreach and Evangelism MAT is to promote the evangelism and outreach of the church. The team leader will enlist members of his or her MAT from the congregation. The Outreach and Evangelism MAT will coordinate church visitation, evangelism training and outreach events of the church.

### SECTION 4. WORSHIP MINISTRY ACTION TEAM

The Worship MAT will be under the direction of the Worship Pastor or a team leader appointed by the elders. The purpose of the Worship MAT is to lead the church in magnifying the greatness of God in Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit by skillfully combining God's Word with music, thereby motivating the gathered church to proclaim the gospel, to cherish God's presence, and to live for God's glory. The team leader will enlist members of the Worship MAT from the congregation. Worship MAT members include musicians, vocalists, lay readers and other personnel as determined by the Worship Pastor. As the number of available musicians and vocalists increase, the Pastor of Worship may divide the Worship MAT team into smaller teams.

### SECTION 5. CHILDREN AND STUDENT MINISTRY ACTION TEAM

The Children and Student MAT will be under the direction of the Pastor of Children and Students or a team leader appointed by the elders. The purpose of the Children and Student MAT is to promote and direct the discipleship, education and evangelism of children and students. The Children and Student MAT will enlist and equip children's

Sunday School teachers, student ministry teachers and other workers as required to fulfill their mission. All individuals working with children and students will be required to undergo thorough screening that includes criminal background and sexual offender checks.

#### SECTION 6. MISSIONS MINISTRY ACTION TEAM

The Missions MAT will be under the direction of the Missions Pastor or a team leader appointed by the elders. The purpose of the Missions MAT is to promote North American and International Missions awareness and involvement in the church. The Missions MAT will conduct special mission's emphases such as Lottie Moon and Annie Armstrong. The Missions MAT organizes and coordinates short-term mission trips.

#### SECTION 7. MISCELLANEOUS

1. Other MATs may be formed at the discretion of the elders as required to fulfill the mission of the church. These teams may be temporary or long term depending upon the nature of the ministry.
2. Pastor Search Ministry Team
  - a. Whenever there is a vacancy in the leading elder/pastor position, the church will elect a Pastor Search Ministry Team. The Pastor Search Ministry Team will be responsible for receiving resumes for potential pastors, interviewing qualified candidates and choosing one qualified candidate to bring to the congregation for a vote.
  - b. The pastoral/leading elder candidate will be presented for a vote at a special called congregational meeting. The congregation will be given at least one week's notice of this meeting. The pastoral/leading elder candidate must receive 3/4 of the voting members present to be called and installed in office. Voting will be by secret ballot.
  - c. The Pastor Search Ministry Team will consist of five (5) members. Two elders will be selected by the elder board to serve on the team. One deacon/ness will be selected by the deacon board to the team. The other two members of the team may be from the general congregation. The candidates from the general congregation for the Pastor Search Ministry Team may be nominated by any member of the congregation. Those nominated will be elected by a simple majority of the voting members present. Voting will be by secret ballot.

#### Article 4

#### **Bayview Christian Child Development Center**

Bayview Christian Child Development Center (CDC) is a ministry of Bayview Baptist Church. It is under the oversight of the elder board. The elder board will act as the school board. The elder board will draft the school budget. The school budget is approved by the church at the winter congregational meeting. The operation of the CDC will be under the direct supervision of the pastor.

**Article 5**  
**Ordinances**

The ordinances of the church shall be baptism and the Lord's Supper (Communion). The mode of baptism shall be by immersion and is a requirement of every member.

Communion shall be observed once each month. The date and time will be designated by the Pastor. Communion shall be open to all believers present in the meeting.

**Article 6**  
**Meetings**

1. Regular meetings for worship will be held every Lord's Day morning. Prayer meeting will be held on Wednesday evening.
2. Special meetings, such as evangelism, Bible conferences and concerts shall be under the discretion of the pastor and elders.
3. Meetings for the transaction of business (i.e., congregational meetings) will be held in the fall/winter and spring/summer. Regular congregational meetings may be rescheduled at the discretion of the pastor and elders.
4. The pastor and elders shall call special congregational meetings when necessary, or when requested to do so in writing by seven (7) members. The notice of such special meetings shall be publicly given from the pulpit on the Sunday preceding the meeting.

No business can be transacted at these special congregational meetings other than publicly announced and otherwise stated as regular congregation meetings in this constitution.

5. The quorum for the transaction of business shall be all voting members present.

**Article 7**  
**Offerings**

1. Tithes and offerings will be received in every service except prayer meetings.
2. Special offerings will be received during any worship service when deemed necessary.
3. A love offering may be taken during any worship service when deemed appropriate.
4. The financial receipts of this church ministry shall be carried on only through the free will giving of tithes and offerings. Special fund raisers shall be approved by the elders in advance.

**Article 8**  
**Amendments**

Amendments to the constitution and bylaws may be submitted at any regular congregational meeting or special called congregational meeting. A 3/4 majority of voting members present is required to adopt any changes.

No change can be made in the constitution and bylaws that affects the doctrine of the church, the requirements for membership, or the relationship of this church in its cooperative efforts of churches of like faith and order.

**Article 9**  
**Rules of Order**

The current edition of *Roberts Rules of Order* shall be the authority of all parliamentary procedure and will stand as the final authority on any question requiring a parliamentary decision.

Notes:

This constitution formed September 1, 1948

This constitution revised  
January 9, 1952  
April 26, 1954  
July 21, 1954  
December 18, 1963  
October 18, 1977  
July 9, 1997  
September 24, 2008