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**Baptist General Convention of Texas**

**Office of Intercultural Ministries**

**7557 Rambler Road Suite 1200**

**Dallas TX 75231-2388**

**1-888-244-9400**

**[www.texasbaptists.org](http://www.texasbaptists.org)**

**Key Contact Information for  
The Office of Intercultural Ministries:**

**Mark Heavener - Director**

Office / Cell: 281-728-8585

[Mark.heavener@texasbaptists.org](mailto:Mark.heavener@texasbaptists.org)

**Linda Howell – Intercultural Specialist**

Office / Cell: 214-843-6364

[Linda.howell@texasbaptists.org](mailto:Linda.howell@texasbaptists.org)

**Arianna Bailey – Administrative Assistant**

Office: 214-828-5379

If you would like to send a Fax, call the office # above for details.

[Arianna.bailey@texasbaptists.org](mailto:Arianna.bailey@texasbaptists.org)

### **Consultants and Fellowship Leaders**

The Office of Intercultural Ministries at any one time has several language consultants. Please write in your consultants contact information below.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Many Language groups have fellowships. Each year the fellowship leaders elect a new moderator. Please write in your fellowship leader contact information below.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

## **Brief history and function of Office of Intercultural Ministry BGCT.**

The BGCT Office of Intercultural Ministries was originally called the Intercultural Initiatives and was established in 2001. Patty Lane who was the founding director is still the director today. She came to the position after 17 years as the Intercultural Consultant for Church starting.

Our mission is to continually create contextualized strategies and resources through relationship networks; focusing on growing the immigrant and refugee churches and mobilizing Texas Baptists to reach out to the new people groups within our state. This includes connecting with every intercultural congregation at the point of their need or desire to facilitate, encourage, and strengthen their ability to accomplish their God-given vision.

We relate to approximately 300 congregations/groups throughout the state and to any congregation who is seeking to build relationships and ministry with people of a language other than English or Spanish.

## **Intercultural Fellowships**

The BGCT through the Office Intercultural Ministries has the unique privilege to partner with seven fellowships of our Intercultural churches in Texas. We partner in many ways to support each fellowship with contextualized training and

pastoral support/mentoring. Below is a brief summary of each fellowship.

### **African**

The African Fellowship is one of our newest and yet oldest of Intercultural Fellowships. In the mid 80's, an African Fellowship formed including congregations relating to Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana, Ethiopia, Eritrea and others. Over the years, this group began to move into separate fellowships to better serve their specific constituents. They function autonomously as an independent fellowship, Joint Evangelical African Baptist Church of Texas.

### **Cambodian**

The Cambodian Fellowship is a combination of both pastors and church leaders. They work together with the Office of Intercultural Ministries and WMU to provide several trainings a year. These trainings include two in the spring by region, and one statewide joint conference in the summer. In the fall, a statewide family retreat is held.

### **Chinese**

The Chinese Baptist Fellowship of Texas was established in 1987 to meet the need for culturally appropriate training and address topics of interest. This statewide pastor's fellowship meets twice a year once in the spring and once in the fall. Their meetings are for fellowship and for peer learning. In addition to these two meetings, the pastors sponsor several Chinese events each year. They include Chinese Family Retreat, Pioneer

Leadership Conference and other special events. The pastors also meet regionally for meetings and planning.

## **Japanese**

The Japanese Baptist Fellowship of Texas unites all the Japanese Ministries of Texas. Both congregations and Bible study groups participate in this fellowship. Each year they conduct a statewide Japanese Retreat that draws churches from surrounding states as well. The purpose of the retreat is spiritual renewal, training and fellowship. The participants are multi-generational, and worship involves everything from songs and dance from Okinawa to contemporary Christian with everything in between.

## **Korean**

The BGCT has a long history with the Korean Baptist Fellowship of Texas (KBFT). Beginning with a role in its development and continuing to relate to this fellowship through BGCT congregations and our consultant, Pastor Song Pak. The BGCT assists with conferences, training and special events for Pastors and congregations. These events are designed to enhance effectiveness and spiritual development within the Korean communities of Texas.

## **Laotian**

The BGCT partners with the Laotian Fellowship to provide training and encouragement to the congregations and increase outreach to the Lao populations in Texas. This fellowship, with the assistance of the BGCT, provides equipping trainings for both pastors and church leaders. These trainings occur several

times a year. In addition to the equipping trainings, the fellowship also coordinates a certificate theological training in Lao.

## **Vietnamese**

The Vietnamese Baptist Fellowship of Texas and the BGCT continue in a long-term partnership and are very active with trainings seminars throughout the year. In this long-term partnership, many churches have been planted and a certificate theological training in Vietnamese has developed.

## **Intercultural Advisory Council**

The Intercultural Advisory Council exists to bring a broad representation across many cultures to assist the work of the Office of Intercultural Ministries. This council meets for leadership development and strategic planning. This council assists their fellowships in understanding and communicating important information and issues. Most importantly, it exists to create broader understanding, fellowship and friendship across the many cultures represented.

## **Intercultural Strategic Partners**

ISP exists to provide a way for intercultural churches to engage in contextually relevant missions. This ministry from the Office of Intercultural Ministries is a partnership with an advisor board of Intercultural pastors who oversee budget from the BGCT's Worldwide Cooperative Program. All



Intercultural churches are eligible to apply for assistance.  
Contact our office for the current year application.

### **What is a Baptist Church?**

Every Baptist church is an autonomous, self-governing, body of believers. Each church is called together by God to advance the gospel of Jesus Christ in their community and throughout the world. Baptizing and making disciples of every believer. All authority is held in the local church. Each church is competent to study and interpret the Bible under the illumination of the Holy Spirit. Each church is responsible to call and ordain pastors, deacons and appoint leaders and teachers based on each church understanding of scripture.

### **Cooperative Nature of Baptists**

Baptist churches are autonomous, but they work together to do more in the advance evangelism and missions. Baptist churches work together through participation in and with Baptist entities including associations and state conventions, such as the BGCT, national and international entities. Your gifts of support to the Cooperative Program allow the BGCT to come underneath and strengthen your churches' ministries. For more information on how cooperative funds work and the cooperative nature of Baptists visit:

<http://texasbaptists.org/ministries/other-ministries/office-of-cooperative-program-ministry>

See Appendix 1 for CP giving form or [click here](#)

<https://texasbaptists.s3.amazonaws.com/giving/2018%20Gift%20Remittance%20Form-v9.pdf>

### Four Baptist Freedoms

Dr. Jim Denison, chief vision officer of Denison Ministries, believes one way of classifying Baptist Distinctives is called the "Four Freedoms". Here it is as articulated by Baptist historian Walter B. Shurden:

- **Soul freedom:** the soul is competent before God, and capable of making decisions in matters of faith without coercion or compulsion by any larger religious or civil body
- **Church freedom:** freedom of the local church from outside interference, whether government or civilian (subject only to the law where it does not interfere with the religious teachings and practices of the church)
- **Bible freedom:** the individual is free to interpret the Bible for himself or herself, using the best tools of scholarship and biblical study available to the individual
- **Religious freedom:** the individual is free to choose whether to practice their religion, another religion or no religion; Separation of church and state is often called the "civil corollary" of religious freedom

### 1963 Baptist Faith and Message

Baptist General Convention of Texas affirms, in its entirety, the Baptist Faith and Message Statement, as adopted in 1963, as a unifying statement of our common faith and practice. For full text of the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message see appendix 2 or visit:

<http://s3.amazonaws.com/texasbaptists/about/Baptist-faith-and-message.pdf>

### **Beliefs Important to Baptists**

Additional study material on beliefs important to Baptists available here:

<http://s3.amazonaws.com/texasbaptists/church+ministry+resources/2011-Baptist-Distinctives-Book.pdf>

<http://baptistwaypress.org/adults/new-category-5/>

Further on-line Articles about being Baptist:

<http://www.baptistdistinctives.org/resources/articles/>

### **Baptist Polity**

Baptists believe that each local church belongs to God and God gives each church its mission. So, Christ is the head of each local church. Each member is under the Lordship of Christ. Each **congregation** receives its authority from God. Each congregation has the responsibility to administer that authority according to biblical principles and the character of Christ. Baptists hold to the biblical teaching of the priesthood of all believers. So, the governance of a Baptist church is congregational. The final authority of the governance of the church is resting on each member under the Lordship of Christ. It is through this mutual submission

to Christ and each other that the congregation prayerfully and in unity administers the affairs of the church. Whether in the delegation of church matters to the pastor, committees, staff, deacons or any other group in the church or decision made by the whole congregation. These rules of order should be set down in the church's policies and guidelines and are found in the churches constitution and by-laws.

The New Testament speaks of two offices for the local church, pastor and deacons. These offices do not convey "a special sense of authority or privilege" but rather that "these persons have been gifted by God to serve" the congregation. Each church "calls out" (ordains) those, whom God leads, to fill this role of service to that congregation.

The role of **pastor** is to serve (shepherd) the congregation's spiritual and personal needs. The pastor is also to equip the members to do ministry. Paul uses the term pastor mostly in the active sense of "to pastor". The authority that the local church grants to a pastor is for the "privilege of service". This privilege of service is given to provide "spiritual leadership and guidance" (Titus 1:6-9; 1 Timothy 3:1-7). In this, the pastor sets the example of moral integrity and servant leadership. In the body of Paul's work, the apostle uses the terms pastor, elder and bishop interchangeably. It

was the hieratical church which adopted the Roman Governance system and assigned distinction between these terms. It was that Baptist movement which brought the church back into alignment.

The role of **deacons**, just like the office of pastor, is a term of action. That is an office of practical service and ministry. The qualities for a deacon are similar to that of a pastor and are outlined in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

The role of **members**, just like pastor and deacon, is one of action. The priesthood of all believes gives each access to God. This affirms that each member is to be active in ministry. In matters of the Church, each member first submits to the Lordship of Christ and to each other and prayerful considers each decision make in unity.

The above section was adapted from chapters 5 & 6 from Baptists: History, Distinctives, Relationships. Free online for download at:

<http://s3.amazonaws.com/texasbaptists/church+ministry+resources/2011-Baptist-Distinctives-Book.pdf>

## **Relationships with others**

Cooperation and fellowship are the bases of relationship for Baptist churches and entities. While each Baptist church and entity is independent and autonomous, all cooperate for missions and evangelism and meeting the needs of world and each other. The basis of this is the cooperative fund. Just as first century churches gave to a fund to help the

church in Jerusalem with a great need, today as Baptists, we contribute to a central fund so we can do more together. See Appendix 1 for a copy of the giving form and how the funds are distributed, or visit:

<https://texasbaptists.s3.amazonaws.com/giving/2018%20Gift%20Remittance%20Form-v9.pdf>

### **Local Baptist Associations**

In any given geographical or metro area, Baptist churches form associations for the purpose of fellowship and mutual assistance. They are led by a director of missions (DOM) who, with their staff, provide for the needs of the member churches. These bodies, since they are local in nature, provide council and assistance for the unique needs of the members of the association and provide ways to work together to affect the local community for the advancement of the gospel. As with any Baptist body, local associations respect the autonomy of each of its members.

The above section was adapted from chapter 9 from Baptists: History, Distinctives, Relationships.

### **State Convention**

The Baptist General Convention of Texas exists to encourage and assist churches, associations and institutions in fulfilling God's call to evangelism, fellowship, education, care for those in need and missions. The state convention helps to do things that no individual church can do on their own. Each church participates in their contributions to the Cooperative Fund so that we can do more together. The

Baptist General Convention of Texas has a long history and functions on many levels. One level is the Annual Meeting. Every participating church elects messengers to attend. Here the business of the convention is discussed and voted on, as well as budgets of all entities and ministries of convention are presented and voted on. Reports for all the ministries of the convention are given as well.

The daily activity of the BGCT is executed by the executive director and the executive board.

The everyday ministry of the BGCT is divided into five centers.

**Center for Church Health**

<https://www.texasbaptists.org/ministries/the-center-for-church-health>

**Center for Ministerial Health**

<https://www.texasbaptists.org/ministries/the-center-for-ministerial-health>

**Center for Cultural Engagement**

<https://www.texasbaptists.org/ministries/the-center-for-cultural-engagement>

**Center for Missional Engagement**

<https://www.texasbaptists.org/ministries/center-for-missional-engagement>

**Center for Collegiate Ministry**

<https://www.texasbaptists.org/ministries/the-center-for-collegiate-ministry>

Visit <http://texasbaptists.org/ministries/#other-ministries> for a full list of all ministries and institutions of the BGCT. The Office of Intercultural Ministries will navigate your church through all these offices and resources.

<http://texasbaptists.org/ministries/other-ministries/cultural-connections/intercultural-ministry>

The Executive Board carries out the work of the Convention between annual meetings. This board is made up of pastors and lay leaders who have been elected to carry out the work of the Convention. Executive board members sit on committees that oversee all areas of the BGCT's ministries.

### **National and International Baptist Bodies**

As with the local church, association and state conventions, all Baptist bodies are autonomous. So, participation in national and international Baptist bodies is decided on by each local church. In the BGCT, each local church can choose where their Cooperative gifts are directed. Please see the following websites for details of these national and international Baptist bodies.

Southern Baptist Convention: [www.sbc.net](http://www.sbc.net)

The Baptist World Alliance: [www.bwanet.org](http://www.bwanet.org)

### **Women's Missionary Union (WMU)**

WMU of Texas is a dynamic organization seeking to promote, pray for and give to missions. WMU is about teaching and promoting missions and encouragement to do missions to our Texas Baptists churches. They also organize the yearly Mary Hill Davis offering for state missions. Yearly, the Office of Intercultural Ministries submits requests to WMU for support of our many programs which benefit the



support and development of all Texas Baptists Intercultural churches. For more information about WMU please visit their website: <https://wmutx.org/>

## **Overview of New Church Starting Process**

### **The Church Plant**

The first step is to evaluate if your group is ready for the new church start process. Please consult our office before making an application to the BGCT Church Starting office. Our office has many years of experience in assisting churches through this process that will help avoid some of the pitfalls new intercultural churches face.

New churches that go through this process are expected to become self-supporting, self-governing and self-reproducing. It is the BGCT conviction that churches start churches, so one of the essential relationships in the new church starting process will be your Primary Sponsor Church. They will act as your partner in the birth of your church. They will be administratively, legally and financially responsible for the new church. Your team of Covenant Partners is made of up of other sponsor churches, your local Baptist association and the BGCT Church Starting strategist and Office of Intercultural Ministries who will partner with you, the Church Planting Pastor.

**Sponsor Church**

The Church Starting experience is at its essence about relationships. The primary sponsor church, church planting pastor, local association and the BGCT form a partnership through a formal covenant. It is understood that all the partners have a general agreement on the essentials of the Christian faith and Baptist distinctives. The 1963 Baptist Faith and Message serves as a general guide.

Churches start churches. Associations and conventions come alongside local churches to partner in the process. However, the sponsor church is the initial and lead church starting body. Often there are multiple supporting churches or entities, but for the sake of clarity, one is designated as the primary sponsor church and signs the covenant. The primary sponsor church's responsibilities include:

- Prayer support
- Participation in the strategy of the new church (help with events, outreach, building, etc.)
- Financial or in-kind support
- Administrative support (Fiscal Agent)
- Employment issues I-9, W2 and or 1099 for the church planting pastor
- Being represented at the Quarterly Growth Review Meetings

- Covenant signing primary sponsor understands that they are legally responsible
- Primary sponsor fully cooperating BGCT Church in the CP

### **Steps to the BGCT New Church Starting**

- Submit New Church Application online. Please ask Office of Intercultural Ministries for the link.
- You will be contacted by the BGCT Church Starting strategist for your area.
- A formal BGCT Assessment Evaluation will be completed.
- New Church planter will need to develop their proposal, which includes vision, values statement, strategy with clear goals and a budget. These must cover the 11 components of church starting.
- Next step is a feasibility study that must be completed. BGCT Church Starting strategist and Office of Intercultural Ministries will participate with you in this.
- Covenant partners must be discovered so many informal meetings may take place with various potential partners.
- Formal Resource Discovery Meeting with all covenant partners. Here a thorough discussion of the new church strategy must take place so that all areas of need can be identified.

- A formal Covenant Meeting will be held with all covenant partners and the church planter to understand their relationship and responsibilities. In this meeting all aspects of the new church's start will be finalized including a proposed monthly budget for the first quarter. Then, all partners will sign the New Church Start Covenant.
- The covenant and proposal will be submitted to the Mission Funding Group (MFG) of the Executive Board of the BGCT. The MFG may approve, reject, postpone or amend the proposal. No commitments are made by BGCT without MFG approval.
- If the new church is approved by MFG, then partnership begins. The New Church planter is required to submit monthly reports and to call Quarterly Growth Review Meeting with their covenant partners. Also, each new church is required to give to the Cooperative Program of the BGCT. Also, the Church Starting Office will assign the church planter with a coach.
- Following the church starting process, which may last 3 to 5 years, you and your covenant partners will agree that it is time for the new church to constitute and become a self-governing, self-supporting and reproducing church.
- Additional resource: Intercultural Church Planting Model. See appendix 3.

## Constituting a Church

Constituting a church is a wonderful and exciting time in the life of a church. Before this happens, several steps must be taken to first become a legal entity in the state of Texas, receive tax-exempt status and open a bank account.

- Incorporation: file form 202 – Certificate of Formation for a Non-Profit Corporation with the Secretary of State of Texas. See appendix 4 for sample or click this link to fill out online. [http://www.sos.state.tx.us/corp/forms/202\\_boc.pdf](http://www.sos.state.tx.us/corp/forms/202_boc.pdf)
- Opening a bank account will require Incorporation document from the state of Texas and EIN Number from the IRS. To get an EIN number apply through this link <http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=102767,00.html> See sample form in Appendix 5.
- As a participating partner with the BGCT in regular giving to the Cooperative Program, every church is eligible to fall under the BGCT 501(c)3 IRS tax-exempt status. Send a letter to the Office of Intercultural Ministries stating your desire to partner with the BGCT. Also, send another letter stating you would like to fall under the BGCT's 501(c)3.
- The next step is to fill out Form 209 with the state of Texas. This records that you have received tax-exempt status with the IRS so the Comptroller of the state of Texas can then exempt your church from all taxes. See

Appendix 6 for form.

<https://comptroller.texas.gov/forms/ap-209.pdf>

- The next step is to develop your churches governing documents. This is your constitution and bylaws. Please see appendix 7 for a sample. Also, please contact the Office of Intercultural Ministries to see if a sample copy of is available in your language.
- We also recommend that you attend the “Keeping Your Church Out of Court” seminar. Please contact us for more information.
- The Constitution Worship Service is where the church is officially recognized as a church. Invite all your partners to participate in this service. You can design this service anyway you like. Here a few elements to have in your service.
  - Greeting by partners
  - History of Mission Church
  - Recommendation on the part of your partners to constitute the new church
  - Vote to constitute
  - Call of the Pastor and church leaders
  - Approval of constitution and bylaws
  - Approval of church budget
  - Gift of new to Cooperative Program
  - Presentation of new members
  - Sermon and worship

### **Budget and Accounting Principals**

Ideally, if the church went through the Church Starting process, they would have received training in this area by their sponsor church and BGCT Church Starting strategist. Here is a link to further your understanding of this:

<http://texasbaptists.org/ministries/other-ministries/church-administration>

Please contact the Office of Intercultural Ministries for additional help.

### **Steps to Owning your own Building**

Buying or building your own church can be a challenging situation to say the least. The BGCT stands ready to advise you through these steps. We have consultants that can help with advice on best practices with either purchase of land, building a church or buying a church. Many state and local laws must be followed in this process, so we strongly urge your church to consult our office before they make any purchase of land or buildings.

### **Loans for Facilities and Land**

Baptist Church Loan Corporation (BCLC) provides loans to churches that are affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas. Loans can be for new construction, remodeling, purchasing existing buildings, purchasing land

or refinancing existing debt on more favorable terms.

<https://www.bclcchurchlending.org/>

### **Financial Counseling**

The Baptist Church Loan Corporation's staff members will help your church and its building committee work through issues related to how much debt your church can afford. Also, BCLC's website contains a handy calculator to help determine the maximum debt your church should consider.

### **Loan Calculator**

An online calculator for determining the monthly payment required on a 15-year note using the Baptist Church Loan Corporation's current lending rate is available on their website.

<http://www.bclcchurchlending.org/mortgage-calculator.html>

The "Financing Your Church Building" booklet gives suggestions and alternatives for developing an affordable plan to build or remodel your worship facilities or to finance a mission facility. It describes types of financing with the advantages and disadvantages of each and provides advice on how to determine how much debt your church can afford, how to evaluate resources and needs, and the steps involved in the loan processing and closing procedures. The booklet can be downloaded as a PDF document from the website. A printed copy can be requested by e-mail.

### **Financing Guidelines**



Financial planning provides a church with helpful hints about how much debt it can afford, creating a building budget and determining what funds will be available for the project. Careful financial planning is essential and vital to the success of any building project. A summary of BCLC lending guidelines including loan-to-appraised value ratio, debt-to-income ratio, loan amortization term, interest rate and required legal documents is available.

### **Small Church Loans and Grants**

<https://texasbaptists.org/ministries/church-architecture/building-funding>

#### **Small Church Loan**

Established by the Mary Hill Davis Offering for Texas Missions, the Small Church Loan fund provides construction loans of up to \$25,000 for congregations with a worship attendance of 100 people or less, annual church income of \$100,000 or less and for a construction project of \$200,000 or less. The loan has a 10-year term at 6 percent interest. Loans are provided to churches that are affiliated with the BGCT. Contact our Church Architecture office for details.

#### **Smith Loan**

Established by the R.W. Smith family, this fund provides loans of up to \$7,500 to churches with membership of 200 or less for church building improvements and new construction. The loan has a six-year term with a low interest rate. Loans are

provided to churches that are affiliated with the BGCT .  
Contact our Church Architecture office for full details.

### **Small Church Matching Grant**

Funded by the Mary Hill Davis Offering for Texas Missions, this one-time matching grant provides up to \$5,000 to match money raised by a congregation for remodeling or new construction. It is available for churches at least five years or older with worship attendance of 100 or less, annual income of \$100,000 or less, for construction projects of \$200,000 or less. Grants are provided to churches that are affiliated with the BGCT as funds are available. Contact our architecture office for details.

### **Theological Training and Development**

Several Intercultural fellowships, such as the Vietnamese and Lao, have theological certificate programs in their heart languages. The BGCT has several colleges and seminaries for degreed training. Please contact the Office of Intercultural Ministries for assistance in this area.

### **Church Resources**

The BGCT has a wealth of resources for training and development of your church. Please contact the Office of Intercultural Ministries with your needs. We will facilitate the connection to your needed resources and assist in

contextualizing that resource to meet your needs in a culturally sensitive way.

## **Highlighted Resources**

### **Adult**

GC2 Press provides adult Sunday school material in the following languages all free to download. If your language is not listed, please contact our office.

(Chinese, Cambodian, Laotian, Vietnamese, Korean, Karen, Simplified English)

<http://gc2press.org>

### **Children Youth and Young Adult**

GC2 Press also provides Sunday school materials in English. Please contact our office to evaluate what is best for your church. We can also arrange Sunday school teacher training.

### **Intercultural Youth Camp**

Camp Fusion is designed by and for our second-generation youth under the supervision of the Office of Intercultural Ministries. It is designed to provide spiritual impact in a culturally relevant way to meet the needs of intercultural youth from Texas Baptists churches. It is the engine that drives our intercultural youth groups across the state. No youth group is too small to attend. Many churches over the years have launched their youth group at camp. The camp is

held in June every year and the cost is kept low so all churches can participate. Camp is for those who have completed the 6<sup>th</sup> grade through the 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

<http://texasbaptists.org/youth/camp-fusion>

### **Youth Leadership Development**

The Office of Intercultural Ministries recognizes the changes our intercultural churches face in the development of their youth. We have developed a program to assist your church. The Leadership Training Institute (LTI) is designed to provide spiritual formation and leadership skills to your emerging youth leaders. Please pray and choose 2-5 of your emerging 10-12<sup>th</sup> graders and early college students. LTI meets on Sunday afternoons 3-4 times a semester. Your youth will receive development in issues of spiritual formation and hands on leadership skills in developing either a service project or outreach event. As they develop, they are invited to participate in mission trips and leadership for Camp Fusion. Please contact Mark Heavener for applications to participate in LTI. [Mark.heavener@texasbaptists.org](mailto:Mark.heavener@texasbaptists.org)

### **English Ministry**

The Office of Intercultural Ministries stands ready to assist your church in the development of thriving English ministries and congregations. We are ready to consult your church on the steps needed to build and maintain intergenerational relationships in the creation of these ministries. In addition

to our consulting, the skills and experiences your youth leaders receive through the LTI program lay the groundwork for your English ministries.

#### APPENDIX 1:

Click on the link to access the current BGCT giving form

[www.texasbaptists.org/give](http://www.texasbaptists.org/give)

## APPENDIX 2:

### Baptist Faith and Message

## 1963 STATEMENT

### 3 THE SCRIPTURES

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is the record of 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. 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. The criterion by which the Bible is to be interpreted is Jesus Christ.

Ex. 24:4; Deut. 4:1-2; 17:19; Josh. 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11, 89, 105, 140; Isa. 34:16; 40:8; Jer. 15:16; 36; Matt. 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Rom. 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Heb. 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. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

### 2

#### 3 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 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.

Gen. 1:1; 2:7; Ex. 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Levit. 22:2; Deut. 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chron. 29:10; Psalms 19:1-3; Isa. 43:3; 15; 64:8; Jer. 10:10; 17:13; Matt. 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; Rom. 8:14-15; 1 Cor. 8:6; Gal. 4:6; Eph. 4:6; Col. 1:15; 1 Tim. 1:17; Heb. 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 the demands and necessities of human nature and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His 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, partaking of the nature of God and of man, and 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. Gen. 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isa. 7:14; 53; Matt. 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; Rom. 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3, 34; 10:4; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2:2; 8:6;

15:1-8, 24-28; 2 Cor. 5:19-21; Gal. 4:4-5; Eph. 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Phil. 2:5-11; Col. 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thess. 4:14-18; 1 Tim 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Heb. 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; Rev. 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. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. 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 assurance of God to 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.

Gen. 1:2; Judg. 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isa. 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matt. 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; Rom. 8:9-11, 14-16, 26-27; 1 Cor. 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11; Gal. 4:6; Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thess. 5:19; 1 Tim. 3:16; 4:1; 2 Tim. 1:14; 3:16; Heb. 9:8, 14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Rev. 1:10; 22:17.

## III. MAN

Man was created by the special act of God, in His own image, and is the crowning work of His 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, and as soon as they are capable of moral action become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfil 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 man possesses dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Gen. 1:26-30; 2:5, 7, 18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isa. 6:5; Jer. 17:5; Matt. 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Rom. 1:19-32; 3:10-18, 23; 5:6, 12, 19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18, 29; 1 Cor. 1:21-31; 15:19, 21-22; Eph. 2:1-22; Col. 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

3

## IV. SALVATION

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, sanctification, and glorification.

3 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 Savior. 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 into a relationship of peace and favor with God.

2. 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 perfection through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

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

Gen. 3:15; Ex. 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matt. 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; 15:1-6; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Rom 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 Cor. 1:18, 30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Cor. 5:17-20; Gal. 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Eph. 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Phil. 2:12-13; Col. 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thess. 5:23-24; 2 Tim. 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Heb. 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; Rev. 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

## V. GOD'S PURPOSE OF GRACE

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, 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 a 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, 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.

Gen. 12:1-3; Ex. 19:5-8; 1 Sam. 8:4-7, 19-22; Isa. 5:1-7; Jer. 31:31ff.; Matt. 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; Rom. 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7, 26-36; 1 Cor. 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Eph. 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Col. 1:12-14;

2 Thess. 2:13-14; 2 Tim. 1:12; 2:10, 19; Heb. 11:39-12:2; 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 a local body of baptized believers who are associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, observing the two ordinances of Christ, committed to His teachings, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth.

This church is an autonomous body, operating through democratic processes under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. In such a congregation members are equally responsible. Its Scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. The New Testament speaks also of the church as the body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages.

Matt. 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; Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Eph. 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11, 21; 5:22-32; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:18; 1 Tim. 3:1-15; 4:14; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Rev. 2-3; 21:2-3.

4

## 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 Savior, 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. Matt. 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; Acts 20:7; Rom. 6:3-5; 1 Cor. 10:16, 21; 11:23-29; Col. 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 be employed in exercises of worship and



spiritual devotion, both public and private, and by refraining from worldly amusements, and resting from secular employments, work of necessity and mercy only being excepted.  
Ex. 20:8-11; Matt. 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; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Col. 2:16; 3:16; Rev. 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.

Gen. 1:1; Isa. 9:6-7; Jer. 23:5-6; Matt. 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; Rom. 5:17; 8:19; 1 Cor. 15:24-28;  
Col. 1:13; Heb. 11:10, 16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Rev. 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 be dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isa. 2:4; 11:9; Matt. 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; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Rom. 14:10; 1 Cor. 4:5; 15:24-28, 35-58; 2 Cor. 5:10; Phil. 3:20-21;  
Col. 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thess. 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thess. 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Tim. 6:14; 2; 2 Tim. 4:1, 8; Titus 2:13; Heb 9:27-28; James 5:8;  
2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Rev. 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. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by personal effort and by all other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Gen. 12:1-3; Ex. 19:5-6; Isa. 6:1-8; Matt. 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; Rom. 10:13-15; Eph. 3:1-11;  
1 Thess. 1:8; 2 Tim. 4:5; Heb. 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Rev. 22:17.

5

## XII. EDUCATION

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 schools are 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.

Deut. 4:1, 5, 9, 14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Neh. 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Prov. 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7, 11; 15:14;  
Eccl. 7:19; Matt. 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Cor. 1:18-31; Eph. 4:11-16; Phil. 4:8; Col. 2:3, 8-9; 1 Tim. 1:3-7;

2 Tim. 2:15; 3:14-17; Heb. 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.

Gen. 14:20; Lev. 27:30-32; Deut. 8:18; Mal. 3:8-12; Matt. 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; Rom. 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8-9; 12:15; Phil. 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

## XIV. CO-OPERATION

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 co-operate 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 co-operation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Co-operation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such co-operation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Ex. 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judg. 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Neh. 4; 8:1-5; Matt. 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1-ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Cor. 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Cor. 8-9; Gal. 1:6-10; Eph. 4:1-16; Phil. 1:15-18.

## XV. THE CHRISTIAN AND THE SOCIAL ORDER

Every Christian is under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in his own life 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 Christ Jesus. The Christian should oppose in the spirit of Christ every form of greed, selfishness, and vice. He should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. 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.

Ex. 20:3-17; Lev. 6:2-5; Deut. 10:12; 27:17; Psalms 101:5; Mic. 6:8; Zech. 8:16; Matt. 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; Rom. 12:14; 1 Cor. 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Gal. 3:26-28; Eph. 6:5-9; Col. 3:12-17; 1 Thess. 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

6

## 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. Isa. 2:4; Matt. 5:9, 38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36, 38; Rom. 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Heb. 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.

Gen. 1:27; 2:7; Matt. 6:6-7, 24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Rom. 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Gal. 5:1, 13; Phil. 3:20; 1 Tim. 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

APPENDIX 3:

Intercultural Church Planting Model

	Bible Study Attendance	Leaders who Can Teach and Minister	Worship Attendance	Offerings	Per Capita Giving	Budget	Outside Funding	Future Church Building or Renting (Suggested 30%)
Start								
6 months								
1 year								
1 ½ year								
2 year								
2 ½ year								
3 year								

## APPENDIX 4

### Texas State Incorporation Form 202

Link: [http://www.sos.state.tx.us/corp/forms/202\\_boc.pdf](http://www.sos.state.tx.us/corp/forms/202_boc.pdf)

Instructions in filling out Form 202

**Article 1 – Name of Church**

**Article 2** – Choose B, use name of person filling out form from your church. Such as the Pastor or Leader.

**Article 3** – Baptist churches are led by the congregations so you will not have a board of Directors so go to next page and check that the ***“Management ... is to be vested in ... members.”***

**Article 4** – Check A. Baptist Churches have Members.

**Article 5** – State purpose of your church. Something about regular gathering for worship of God. State purpose of church such as to reach your language speakers with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**Organizer** – Use name of Pastor or Leader.

**Effectiveness of Filing** – Check A

**Execution** – Person listed above as Organizer must sign it.

Make 2 copies and mail both to address on first page of form with fee of \$25. **Must send two copies to the Secretary of State of Texas.**

## Form 202

(Revised 05/11)

Submit in duplicate to:  
Secretary of State  
P.O. Box 13697  
Austin, TX 78711-3697  
512 463-5555  
FAX: 512/463-5709  
**Filing Fee: \$25**



This space reserved for office use.

## Certificate of Formation Nonprofit Corporation

### Article 1 – Entity Name and Type

The filing entity being formed is a nonprofit corporation. The name of the entity is:

### Article 2 – Registered Agent and Registered Office

(See instructions. Select and complete either A or B and complete C.)

☐ A. The initial registered agent is an organization (cannot be entity named above) by the name of:

OR

☐ B. The initial registered agent is an individual resident of the state whose name is set forth below:

First Name	M.I.	Last Name	Suffix
------------	------	-----------	--------

C. The business address of the registered agent and the registered office address is:

Street Address	City	State	Zip Code
		TX	

### Article 3 – Management

The management of the affairs of the corporation is vested in the board of directors. The number of directors constituting the initial board of directors and the names and addresses of the persons who are to serve as directors until the first annual meeting of members or until their successors are elected and qualified are as follows:

*A minimum of three directors is required.*

Director 1				
First Name	M.I.	Last Name	Suffix	
Street or Mailing Address	City	State	Zip Code	Country

Director 2				
First Name	M.I.	Last Name	Suffix	
Street or Mailing Address	City	State	Zip Code	Country

Director 3				
First Name	M.I.	Last Name	Suffix	
Street or Mailing Address	City	State	Zip Code	Country

**OR**

☐ The management of the affairs of the corporation is to be vested in the nonprofit corporation's members.

#### Article 4 – Membership

(See instructions. Do not select statement B if the corporation is to be managed by its members.)

- ☐ A. The nonprofit corporation shall have members.
- ☐ B. The nonprofit corporation will have no members.

#### Article 5 – Purpose

(See instructions. This form does not contain language needed to obtain a tax-exempt status on the state or federal level.)

The nonprofit corporation is organized for the following purpose or purposes:

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*The following text area may be used to include any additional language or provisions that may be needed to obtain tax-exempt status.*

## Supplemental Provisions/Information

(See instructions.)

Text Area: [The attached addendum, if any, is incorporated herein by reference.]

## Organizer

The name and address of the organizer:

Name

Street or Mailing Address

City

State

Zip Code

## Effectiveness of Filing (Select either A, B, or C.)

- A. ☐ This document becomes effective when the document is filed by the secretary of state.
- B. ☐ This document becomes effective at a later date, which is not more than ninety (90) days from the date of signing. The delayed effective date is: \_\_\_\_\_
- C. ☐ This document takes effect upon the occurrence of a future event or fact, other than the passage of time. The 90<sup>th</sup> day after the date of signing is: \_\_\_\_\_
- The following event or fact will cause the document to take effect in the manner described below:

## Execution

The undersigned affirms that the person designated as registered agent has consented to the appointment. The undersigned signs this document subject to the penalties imposed by law for the submission of a materially false or fraudulent instrument and certifies under penalty of perjury that the undersigned is authorized to execute the filing instrument.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of organizer

Printed or typed name of organizer



## APPENDIX 5

**EIN Number:** This is your churches identification number with the IRS. You must have one to open a bank account or pay salary for pastor and staff.

The IRS would like everyone to use the online system. It is easy and your number is assigned right away. As you can see the form on the next page is complex. The online system asks questions and fills out the form itself.

Link : <http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=102767,00.html>

Click on *“Apply online”*

Click on *“Begin Application”*

**Before you start make sure your PDF reader is up to date.**

**The IRS will assign your number right away online. Print and save.**

Form <b>SS-4</b> (Rev. January 2010) Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service	<b>Application for Employer Identification Number</b> (For use by employers, corporations, partnerships, trusts, estates, churches, government agencies, Indian tribal entities, certain individuals, and others.) ▶ See separate instructions for each line. ▶ Keep a copy for your records.	OMB No. 1545-0003 <b>EIN</b>
Type or print clearly.	<b>1</b> Legal name of entity (or individual) for whom the EIN is being requested	
	<b>2</b> Trade name of business (if different from name on line 1)	<b>3</b> Executor, administrator, trustee, "care of" name
	<b>4a</b> Mailing address (room, apt., suite no. and street, or P.O. box)	<b>5a</b> Street address (if different) (Do not enter a P.O. box.)
	<b>4b</b> City, state, and ZIP code (if foreign, see instructions)	<b>5b</b> City, state, and ZIP code (if foreign, see instructions)
	<b>6</b> County and state where principal business is located	
	<b>7a</b> Name of responsible party	<b>7b</b> SSN, ITIN, or EIN
	<b>8a</b> Is this application for a limited liability company (LLC) (or a foreign equivalent)? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
	<b>8b</b> If 8a is "Yes," enter the number of LLC members ▶	
	<b>8c</b> If 8a is "Yes," was the LLC organized in the United States? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
	<b>9a</b> Type of entity (check only one box). <b>Caution.</b> If 8a is "Yes," see the instructions for the correct box to check. <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 48%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Sole proprietor (SSN) _____  <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership _____  <input type="checkbox"/> Corporation (enter form number to be filed) ▶ _____  <input type="checkbox"/> Personal service corporation _____  <input type="checkbox"/> Church or church-controlled organization _____  <input type="checkbox"/> Other nonprofit organization (specify) ▶ _____  <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) ▶ _____         </div> <div style="width: 48%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Estate (SSN of decedent) _____  <input type="checkbox"/> Plan administrator (TIN) _____  <input type="checkbox"/> Trust (TIN of grantor) _____  <input type="checkbox"/> National Guard <input type="checkbox"/> State/local government  <input type="checkbox"/> Farmers' cooperative <input type="checkbox"/> Federal government/military  <input type="checkbox"/> REMIC <input type="checkbox"/> Indian tribal governments/enterprises            Group Exemption Number (GEN) if any ▶ _____         </div> </div>	
<b>9b</b> If a corporation, name the state or foreign country (if applicable) where incorporated <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 33%;">State</div> <div style="width: 33%;">Foreign country</div> </div>		
<b>10</b> Reason for applying (check only one box) <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 48%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Started new business (specify type) ▶ _____  <input type="checkbox"/> Hired employees (Check the box and see line 13.) <input type="checkbox"/> Compliance with IRS withholding regulations <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) ▶ _____         </div> <div style="width: 48%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Banking purpose (specify purpose) ▶ _____  <input type="checkbox"/> Changed type of organization (specify new type) ▶ _____  <input type="checkbox"/> Purchased going business <input type="checkbox"/> Created a trust (specify type) ▶ _____  <input type="checkbox"/> Created a pension plan (specify type) ▶ _____         </div> </div>		
<b>11</b> Date business started or acquired (month, day, year). See instructions.		
<b>12</b> Closing month of accounting year		
<b>13</b> Highest number of employees expected in the next 12 months (enter -0- if none). If no employees expected, skip line 14. <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 5px;"> <span>Agricultural</span> <span>Household</span> <span>Other</span> </div>		
<b>14</b> If you expect your employment tax liability to be \$1,000 or less in a full calendar year and want to file Form 944 annually instead of Forms 941 quarterly, check here. (Your employment tax liability generally will be \$1,000 or less if you expect to pay \$4,000 or less in total wages.) If you do not check this box, you must file Form 941 for every quarter. <input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>15</b> First date wages or annuities were paid (month, day, year). <b>Note.</b> If applicant is a withholding agent, enter date income will first be paid to nonresident alien (month, day, year) ▶		
<b>16</b> Check <b>one</b> box that best describes the principal activity of your business. <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 48%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Construction <input type="checkbox"/> Rental &amp; leasing <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation &amp; warehousing  <input type="checkbox"/> Real estate <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/> Finance &amp; insurance         </div> <div style="width: 48%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Health care &amp; social assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Wholesale-agent/broker  <input type="checkbox"/> Accommodation &amp; food service <input type="checkbox"/> Wholesale-other <input type="checkbox"/> Retail  <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____         </div> </div>		
<b>17</b> Indicate principal line of merchandise sold, specific construction work done, products produced, or services provided.		
<b>18</b> Has the applicant entity shown on line 1 ever applied for and received an EIN? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If "Yes," write previous EIN here ▶		
Third Party Designee	Complete this section <b>only</b> if you want to authorize the named individual to receive the entity's EIN and answer questions about the completion of this form.	
	Designee's name	Designee's telephone number (include area code)
	Address and ZIP code	Designee's fax number (include area code)
	Under penalties of perjury, I declare that I have examined this application, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, it is true, correct, and complete.	
Name and title (type or print clearly) ▶		
Signature ▶		
Date ▶		
Applicant's telephone number (include area code)		
Applicant's fax number (include area code)		

For Privacy Act and Paperwork Reduction Act Notice, see separate instructions.

Cat. No. 16055N

Form **SS-4** (Rev. 1-2010)

Form SS-4 (Rev. 1-2010)

Page **2**

## Do I Need an EIN?

File Form SS-4 if the applicant entity does not already have an EIN but is required to show an EIN on any return, statement, or other document.<sup>1</sup> See also the separate instructions for each line on Form SS-4.

IF the applicant...	AND...	THEN...
Started a new business	Does not currently have (nor expect to have) employees	Complete lines 1, 2, 4a-8a, 8b-c (if applicable), 9a, 9b (if applicable), and 10-14 and 16-18.
Hired (or will hire) employees, including household employees	Does not already have an EIN	Complete lines 1, 2, 4a-6, 7a-b (if applicable), 8a, 8b-c (if applicable), 9a, 9b (if applicable), 10-18.
Opened a bank account	Needs an EIN for banking purposes only	Complete lines 1-5b, 7a-b (if applicable), 8a, 8b-c (if applicable), 9a, 9b (if applicable), 10, and 18.
Changed type of organization	Either the legal character of the organization or its ownership changed (for example, you incorporate a sole proprietorship or form a partnership) <sup>2</sup>	Complete lines 1-18 (as applicable).
Purchased a going business <sup>3</sup>	Does not already have an EIN	Complete lines 1-18 (as applicable).
Created a trust	The trust is other than a grantor trust or an IRA trust <sup>4</sup>	Complete lines 1-18 (as applicable).
Created a pension plan as a plan administrator <sup>5</sup>	Needs an EIN for reporting purposes	Complete lines 1, 3, 4a-5b, 9a, 10, and 18.
Is a foreign person needing an EIN to comply with IRS withholding regulations	Needs an EIN to complete a Form W-8 (other than Form W-8ECI), avoid withholding on portfolio assets, or claim tax treaty benefits <sup>6</sup>	Complete lines 1-5b, 7a-b (SSN or ITIN optional), 8a, 8b-c (if applicable), 9a, 9b (if applicable), 10, and 18.
Is administering an estate	Needs an EIN to report estate income on Form 1041	Complete lines 1-6, 9a, 10-12, 13-17 (if applicable), and 18.
Is a withholding agent for taxes on non-wage income paid to an alien (i.e., individual, corporation, or partnership, etc.)	Is an agent, broker, fiduciary, manager, tenant, or spouse who is required to file Form 1042, Annual Withholding Tax Return for U.S. Source Income of Foreign Persons	Complete lines 1, 2, 3 (if applicable), 4a-5b, 7a-b (if applicable), 8a, 8b-c (if applicable), 9a, 9b (if applicable), 10, and 18.
Is a state or local agency	Serves as a tax reporting agent for public assistance recipients under Rev. Proc. 80-4, 1980-1 C.B. 581 <sup>7</sup>	Complete lines 1, 2, 4a-5b, 9a, 10, and 18.
Is a single-member LLC	Needs an EIN to file Form 8832, Classification Election, for filing employment tax returns and excise tax returns, or for state reporting purposes <sup>8</sup>	Complete lines 1-18 (as applicable).
Is an S corporation	Needs an EIN to file Form 2553, Election by a Small Business Corporation <sup>9</sup>	Complete lines 1-18 (as applicable).

<sup>1</sup> For example, a sole proprietorship or self-employed farmer who establishes a qualified retirement plan, or is required to file excise, employment, alcohol, tobacco, or firearms returns, must have an EIN. A partnership, corporation, REMIC (real estate mortgage investment conduit), nonprofit organization (church, club, etc.), or farmers' cooperative must use an EIN for any tax-related purpose even if the entity does not have employees.

<sup>2</sup> However, do not apply for a new EIN if the existing entity only (a) changed its business name, (b) elected on Form 8832 to change the way it is taxed (or is covered by the default rules), or (c) terminated its partnership status because at least 50% of the total interests in partnership capital and profits were sold or exchanged within a 12-month period. The EIN of the terminated partnership should continue to be used. See Regulations section 301.6109-1(d)(2)(iii).

<sup>3</sup> Do not use the EIN of the prior business unless you became the "owner" of a corporation by acquiring its stock.

<sup>4</sup> However, grantor trusts that do not file using Optional Method 1 and IRA trusts that are required to file Form 990-T, Exempt Organization Business Income Tax Return, must have an EIN. For more information on grantor trusts, see the Instructions for Form 1041.

<sup>5</sup> A plan administrator is the person or group of persons specified as the administrator by the instrument under which the plan is operated.

<sup>6</sup> Entities applying to be a Qualified Intermediary (QI) need a QI-EIN even if they already have an EIN. See Rev. Proc. 2000-12.

<sup>7</sup> See also *Household employer* on page 4 of the instructions. **Note.** State or local agencies may need an EIN for other reasons, for example, hired employees.

<sup>8</sup> See *Disregarded entities* on page 4 of the instructions for details on completing Form SS-4 for an LLC.

<sup>9</sup> An existing corporation that is electing or revoking S corporation status should use its previously-assigned EIN.

## APPENDIX 6

State of Texas Form 209 for Tax Exempt status.

<https://comptroller.texas.gov/forms/ap-209.pdf>

**You will need your Incorporation form with your filling number from the Secretary of State.**

**You will need your EIN number.**

**You will need to send a copy of your letter from the BGCT that came with your 501c3 document.**

**Send form to:**

**Comptroller Of Public Accounts**

**Exempt Organizations Section**

**P.O. Box 13528**

**Austin, TX 78711-352**

**No Fee**





AP-209-2  
(Rev. 6-08/8)

## TEXAS APPLICATION FOR EXEMPTION – RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION

### SECTION A

• Remove All Staples

• TYPE OR PRINT

• Do NOT write in shaded areas.

#### 1. ORGANIZATION NAME

(Legal name as provided in Articles of Incorporation, or, if unincorporated, the governing document.)

#### 2. ORGANIZATION MAILING ADDRESS

Street number, P.O. Box or rural route and box number

City

State/Province

ZIP Code

County (or country, if outside the U.S.)

#### 3. Texas taxpayer number (if applicable)

#### 4. a) Enter filing information issued by the Texas Secretary of State:

File Number

File Date

Month

Day

Year

OR

#### b) ☐ Check this box if this organization is not registered with the Texas Secretary of State.

#### 5. Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN) (Required if applying for exemption on the basis of a federal exemption)

#### 6. Average attendance

at worship service

If average attendance is less than 50, indicate the number of families represented in the average attendance

#### 7. Make only one selection as the organization's primary purpose:

☐ Religious worship services

☐ Ministry

☐ Youth group

☐ Missionary

☐ Bible study

☐ Evangelistic association

#### 8. Date of first worship service

Time

Frequency

#### 9. Time and frequency of worship services

#### 10. Physical address (no P.O. Box) where worship services are conducted

#### 11. Contact information of the person submitting this application

Name

E-mail Address

Organization Name

Daytime Phone (Area code and number)

Extension

Address

City

State

ZIP Code

We will notify you by e-mail when the exemption has been added to let you know where the exemption can be verified online. If an e-mail address is not provided, indicate where our response should be mailed: ☐ organization's mailing address or ☐ mailing address of the submitter.

### SECTION B

Provide the following supporting information as it applies to the appropriate option below:



#### Option A (Member of a common denomination or convention of churches):

- If your organization is a church that is a member of a common denomination or convention of churches, and the parent organization either has a 501(c)(3) federal group exemption, or has previously obtained a religious exemption in Texas for the churches under its jurisdiction, your church can obtain exemption based on its affiliation with the parent organization. Attach a letter from the parent organization stating that your church is a recognized subordinate, or provide the Web site of the parent organization where your church's affiliation can be verified.

Name of parent organization

Parent organization Web site



#### Option B (Independent or nondenominational church):

The following must be included with your application. Information may be in the form of a bulletin, brochure, written statement or Web site:

- Your organization's statement of faith;
- The regular order of what takes place during worship services (for example, invocation, sermon, hymns, closing prayer);
- Evidence that services are open to the public and how they are advertised to the public;
- A description of the facility where the worship services are regularly conducted (pictures are accepted but not required and will not be returned).
- Special note to unincorporated entities:** Include your organization's governing documents, such as the bylaws or constitution.
- Special note to non-Texas organizations:** Include a file-stamped copy of your organization's formation documents AND a current Certificate of Existence from the Secretary of State or equivalent officer in your home state.

If your church has its own 501(c)(3) federal exemption, provide a copy of the IRS determination letter along with the information in option A or B so that we may update our records.

**APPLICATIONS RECEIVED WITHOUT SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION WILL BE RETURNED.**

## APPENDIX 7

### Sample Constitution and Bylaws

# Developing a Constitution & By-Laws for the Local Church

You may wish to use the sample that follows as a guide in developing your church constitution and by-laws. This sample has been compiled from those in use by a number of churches over the past several years. Improve it, change it, and use it any way that works for your church.

You will want to pull together a committee or team to work through this process. The committee or team should be widely representative of your congregation. This is an important assignment and should not be rushed. Prayerful consideration should be given to what should go into the constitution and by-laws, and what should be omitted.

It is best to prepare these documents when the church is in harmony, with no major crisis on the horizon. Churches tend to deal with issues in the constitution and by-laws when they have just gone through a conflict and feel the urgency to “fix” something so they will never have that problem again. Churches cannot develop an adequate constitution and by-laws under stress and disharmony. The experience should be a positive educational process for the members of the committee or team, and for the church membership.

Make the documents positive instruments to enable the church to go about its work in an orderly manner. Avoid making them appear to be negative reactions to church crises.

Try to keep the constitution and by-laws as simple as possible. Avoid complicated statements that are easily misunderstood. This is not easy to do; but it is possible with care. This will also help the church to avoid unnecessary conflict in the future.

Keep the constitution and by-laws up to date. They should be working documents, not items for the archives only. Provide for their periodic review and essential modification.

When the church has made its decision about the proposed documents, dismiss the special committee or team with the thanks of the church for their good work. Once the documents have been approved the work of the committee or team is complete.

Remember, this is only a guide! Adjust the language and content to fit your congregation.

NOTES in blue within the document are not a part of the document, only suggestions and emphasis.

# Sample Constitution And By-Laws

## Preamble

We, the members of \_\_\_\_\_ Church of \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby declare and establish this Constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the body in an orderly manner, to maintain the autonomy of this church in freedom of action in relation to other churches and organizations.

## *Article One*

### NAME

This body shall be known as the \_\_\_\_\_ Church of \_\_\_\_\_, located at \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, Texas.



## Article Two

### OBJECTIVES

To be a dynamic spiritual organism empowered by the Holy Spirit to communicate the Good News of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ with as many people as possible in our church, community, and throughout the world, which is the mission of this church.

To be a worshipping fellowship, experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing His person, and responding in obedience to his leadership, to experience an increasingly meaningful fellowship with God and fellow believers, to help people experience a growing knowledge of God and man.

To be a church that ministers unselfishly to persons in the community and the world in Jesus' name. To be a church whose purpose is to be Christ-like in our daily living by emphasizing total commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the Lordship of Christ.

## Article Three

### PRINCIPLES OF FAITH

We affirm that the Holy Bible is God's revelation to mankind, and that it is inspired by

God, it is without error [in the original manuscripts], it is an accurate record of the history and future of mankind, and that it depicts the birth, life, death and resurrection of the Savior of all mankind, our Lord Jesus Christ, and is therefore the sole basis for our faith.

We regard the scriptures of the Holy Bible as authoritative in all matters of faith, practice, and principle. This church has affirmed as our doctrinal statement *The Baptist Faith and Message* as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963.

The ordinances of the church are baptism and the Lord's Supper.

## Article Four

### PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

We confirm that our primary purpose is the communication of the Good News of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ to all persons as stated in Romans 1:16-17.

We endeavor to equip and enable each individual for this purpose through the provision of opportunities of worship, education, service, and fellowship as described in Ephesians 4: 11-16.

## Article Five

### GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who comprise it, owing allegiance only to its head and founder, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Persons duly received by the members shall constitute the membership. These members shall be individuals who have in common with the members their spiritual union with the Lord Jesus Christ and their agreement on the principles of faith contained in this document. These members, so bound together, regard one another as having equal rank and privilege as well as equal responsibility and obligation in fulfilling the purpose of this church as stated in Galatians 3:26-28.

All internal or external groups created and empowered by the church shall report to and be accountable only to the church, unless otherwise specified by church action under authority of this constitution.

At the same time, this body recognizes the rightful place of the state and pledges itself to the support of federal, state, and local governments in accordance with Romans 12:1-7 and I Peter 2:13-17.

## Article Six

### **RELATIONSHIPS**

This Church is subject to the control of no other civil or ecclesiastical body. However we recognize the benefits and sustain the obligations of mutual cooperation, which are common among Baptist churches, associations and conventions.

## Article Seven

### **AMENDMENTS**

This Constitution may be amended, modified or repealed under the following circumstances: the proposal must be read at one regular business meeting. The proposal must then be presented at the next regular business meeting for action by the church. The proposal must be approved by two-thirds majority vote of members present voting in the affirmative.

## Article Eight

### **SOLE AUTHORITY**

There shall be no worship, education, service by members or fellowship conducted which is in conflict with this constitution. The church shall not conduct any business transaction contrary to the Constitution.

All rules, regulations, bylaws and policies previously approved, if any, by this church in conflict with this Constitution are each and all hereby repealed, set aside and superseded.

This Constitution shall be and is, hereby established as the sole "Constitution" for this church. No rules, regulations, bylaws or policies may be established which conflict with this constitution.

## Article Nine

### **CHURCH COVENANT**

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized by immersion in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, and the relief of the poor, and to the spreading of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and private devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

Article Ten

RATIFICATION

This constitution is hereby ordained and established for \_\_\_\_\_ Church of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ by vote of the membership on \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Moderator/Pastor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Trustee/Deacon Chairman

## BY-LAWS

### ARTICLE ONE CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

#### Section 1: General

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church.

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

#### Section 2: Candidacy

Any person may offer themselves as a candidate for membership in this church. All such candidates shall be presented to the church at any regular church service for membership in any of the following ways:

- (1) By profession of faith and for baptism according to the policies of this church.
- (2) By promise of a letter of recommendation from another Baptist church.
- (3) By restoration upon a statement of prior conversion experience and baptism in a Baptist church when no letter is obtained.

**NOTE: Some churches include the following. If the church does not have a standing membership committee the procedure for electing or appointing such a committee should be spelled out in these By-Laws.**

Should there be any dissent concerning any candidate, such dissent shall be referred to a membership committee for investigation and recommendation to the church within thirty (30) days. A three-fourths vote of those church members present and voting shall be required to elect such candidates to membership.

## **Section 3: New Member Orientation**

New members of this church are expected to participate in the church's new member orientation.

## **Section 4: Rights of Members**

- 1) Every member of the church is entitled to vote at all church business conferences provided the member is present or provision has been made for absentee balloting.
- 2) Every member of the church is eligible for consideration by the membership as candidates for elective offices in the church.
- 3) Every member of the church may participate in the ordinances of the church as administered by the church.

## **Section 5: Termination of Membership**

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways: (1) death of the member, (2) transfer by letter of recommendation to another Baptist church, (3) exclusion by action of this church, or (4) erasure upon request or proof of membership in a church of another denomination.

## **Section 6: Discipline**

It shall be the practice of this church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The pastor, other members of the church staff, and deacons (elders) will be available for counsel and guidance. The attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption and restoration rather than punishment.

Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare and harmony of the church, the pastor and the deacons will take prayerful and reasonable measures to resolve the problem following the principles found in Matthew 18:15-17. If it becomes necessary for the church to take action to exclude a member, a two-thirds vote of the members present is required and the church may proceed to declare the person to no longer be in the membership of the

church. All such proceedings shall be bathed in prayer and exhibit a spirit of Christian kindness and patience.

The church may restore to membership any person previously excluded upon request of the excluded person, and by vote of the church upon evidence of the excluded person's repentance.

Should there be a conflict within the church that involves issues between pastor, staff, deacons and the church membership that could destroy or hinder the work of the church, the church will call for an outside mediator to work with the parties involved to make every reasonable attempt to resolve the conflict. The church should request a mediator before the problem escalates to the point it causes a break in the unity, harmony and fellowship of the congregation. Mediation services can be requested through the state convention offices.

## **ARTICLE TWO**

### **CHURCH OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES**

All who serve as officers of the church and those who serve on church committees shall be members of this church.

#### **Section 1: Church Officers**

The officers of this church shall be the pastor, the church staff as elected by the church, the deacons, a moderator, a clerk, a treasurer, and trustees.

- 1) The pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. The pastor has the responsibility to lead the congregation, the organizations, and the church staff to perform their tasks. The pastor will be expected to delegate appropriate responsibilities to others to ensure the work of the church is done in a consistent manner.

The pastor is leader of pastoral ministries in the church. As such he works with the deacons and the church staff to: (1) lead the church to carry out the mission and purpose of the church, (2) the proclamation of the gospel both inside and outside the church, (3) to provide appropriate care for both church members and persons in the community.

A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. The election shall



take place at a meeting called for that purpose. At least one week's public notice shall be given before a candidate for pastor shall be presented for consideration.

A pastor search committee shall be elected by the church after prayerful consideration. Adequate time should be given to the process to help the church through the transition period.

**NOTE: the church may wish to explore using an Interim Pastor during the time of transition. Churches that have had a pastor who served for more than ten years or have had major problems that led to the previous pastor leaving may want to enlist an Intentional Interim Pastor and work through the Intentional Interim Ministry process. Information about Intentional Interim Ministry and Pastors is available through your state convention offices. As you produce your By-Laws, you may wish to address how the church will work through the interim time and what process you will use. If you decide to use the Intentional Interim Ministry process you may choose to elect your Pastor Search Committee after you are in the process.**

- 1) The pastor search committee will have the responsible for seeking the person that will fulfill the pastor's role for the congregation. The recommendation of the pastor search committee will constitute a nomination. Any church member has the privilege of making other nominations depending on the policies and procedures established by the church. The committee shall bring for the consideration of the church only one name at a time. Election shall be by ballot, an affirmative vote of three fourths of those present and voting (unless previous arrangements are made for absentee balloting) is required to call (elect) the pastor.  
The individual called to fill the pastor's role shall serve until the relationship is terminated by their request or the church's request. The pastor shall preside at meetings of the church unless another staff member or church member has been designated to fill that role. If so designated, the pastor may serve as moderator in all business meetings in keeping with the rules of order authorized in these bylaws.

The pastor may relinquish the office of pastor by giving at least two weeks' notice to the church at the time of resignation.

The church may declare the office of pastor to be vacant. Such action shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose with at least one week's public notice given. Such meeting should take place only after the church has followed the Matthew 18:15-17 principles and/or the church has sought help through mediation. The meeting may be called upon the recommendation of a majority of the personnel committee and the deacons or by written petition signed by not less than one fourth of the resident church members. The moderator for this meeting shall be designated by the members present and elected by majority vote. The moderator shall be someone other than the pastor. The vote to declare the office vacant shall be by secret ballot; an affirmative vote of two thirds of the members present being necessary to

declare the office vacant. Except in instances of gross misconduct by the pastor so excluded from office, the church will compensate the pastor with not less than one twelfth of the pastor's annual compensation. The termination shall be immediate, and the compensation shall be paid in not more than thirty days.

**NOTE: a common guide would be to give the pastor one month for each year served as pastor unless other circumstances apply.**

- 2) The ministerial staff shall be called and employed as the church determines the need for such positions. A job description shall be written when the need for a new ministerial position is determined. Those staff members must show evidence of a personal call of God to ministry and shall be recommended to the church by the personnel committee and approved by church action. At the time of resignation at least two weeks' notice shall be given to the church. The church may vote to vacate the position upon the recommendation of the personnel committee. The personnel committee is to follow the same principles and process used to terminate a pastor. Such termination will be immediate and compensation conditions shall be the same as for the pastor, except that the amount provided shall relate to the individual's annual compensation.

Non-ministerial staff members shall be employed as the church determines need for their services. The church personnel committee shall have the authority to employ and to terminate services of non-ministerial staff members. Such employment and termination of services shall be with the recommendation of the supervising staff member and, as appropriate, with the consultation of related committees of the church.

- 3) The church shall elect deacons by ballot at regular business meetings of the church. There shall be one deacon elected for assigned service for every twelve to fifteen families.

**NOTE: Each church should determine the number of deacons needed according to the size and needs of the church. Rotation of deacons will also be determined by each church and should be used when possible.**

Deacons shall serve on a rotation basis. Each year the assigned term of office of one third of the number of deacons shall expire, and election shall be held to fill vacancies and to add to the deacons such number as the church size warrants. In case of death or removal or incapacity to serve, the church may elect a deacon to fill the unexpired term. **(If a deacon rotation system is in place you may wish to add the following wording: After serving a term of three years' assignment, a deacon shall be eligible for reelection only after the lapse of at least one year.)** There shall be no obligation to recognize as an active deacon one who has been a deacon in another church; but in such instances, his previous ordination by another church of like faith and order shall be recognized by this church. A deacon joining from another church shall not be elected to serve until a member of this church for one year.

In keeping with the meaning of the work and practice in the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. Their task is to serve with the pastor and staff in performing the pastoral ministry tasks of: (1) leading the church in the achievement of its mission, (2) proclaiming the gospel to believers and unbelievers, and (3) caring for the church members and other persons in the community.

- 4) The church shall elect annually a moderator as its presiding officer. In the absence of the moderator, the chairman of deacons shall preside; or in the absence of both, the clerk shall call the church to order and preside for the election of an acting moderator.
- 5) The church shall elect annually a clerk as its clerical officer. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a suitable record of all official actions of the church, except as otherwise provided in these by-laws. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a register of names of members, with dates of admission, dismissals, death or erasure, together with a record of baptisms. The clerk shall issues of dismissal approved by the church, preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give required notice of all meetings where notice is necessary, as indicated in these by-laws. The clerk shall be responsible for preparing the annual letter of the church to the association, state and national conventions.

The church may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to a church secretary or ministry assistant who will assist the elected clerk. All church records are church property and shall be kept in the church office when an office is maintained.

- 6) The church shall elect annually a church treasurer as its financial officer. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out, upon receipt of invoices or vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel, all money or things of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to provide to the church at each regular business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements during the period between business meetings. The treasurer's report and records shall be audited annually by an audit committee or public accountant. The treasurer shall be bonded, the church paying for the bond.

Upon completion of the audit at the end of the fiscal year and its acceptance and approval by the church, the records shall be delivered by the treasurer to the church clerk, who shall keep and preserve the account as a part of the permanent records of the church.

- 7) The church shall elect three or more trustees to serve as legal officers for the church. They shall hold in trust the church property. Upon a specific vote of the church authorizing each action, they shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer any church property. When the signatures of the trustees are required, they shall sign legal documents related to the above items only upon the approval and at the direction of the church body in business meeting.

Trustees shall serve on a rotation basis, with one new trustee being elected each year for a three-year term.

## Section 2: Church Committees

The church body shall determine the number and types of committees that are needed to fulfill the mission of the church. Standing committees shall be elected annually upon the recommendation of the nominating committee or committee on committees. All committee members shall be elected by the church unless otherwise specified in these by-laws. Committee members shall serve on a three-year rotation basis with one-third elected each year.

Committees of the church may include but are not limited to: Personnel Committee, Finance or Stewardship Committee, Missions Committee or Missions Development Council, Property and Space Committee, and any other regular and special committees as the church shall authorize.

- 1) The nominating committee coordinates the staffing of all church leadership positions to be filled by volunteer workers, unless otherwise stipulated in these by-laws. The nominating committee shall be elected annually and serves only for the year in which it is elected.
- 2) The personnel committee assists the church in matters related to employed personnel administration, including those called by church actions. This committee shall assist in determining staff needs, employment, salaries, benefits, other compensation, policies, job descriptions, and personnel services.
- 3) The finance or stewardship committee develops and recommends an overall stewardship development plan, and a unified church budget. It advises and recommends in the administration of the gifts of church members and others, using sound principles of financial management. It works with the treasurer in the preparation and presentation to the church the required reports regarding the financial affairs of the church.
- 4) The property and space committee assists the church in matters related to properties administration. Its work includes such areas as maintaining all church properties for ready use, recommending policies regarding use of properties, consulting with the personnel committee and the church staff regarding the need for, and the employment of, maintenance personnel, and regarding the assignment of supervisory responsibility to appropriate personnel.
- 5) The missions committee or mission development council seeks to discover possibilities for local mission projects, determines the need for new work, and recommends to the church actions needed in establishing or implementing mission projects as necessary.

## ARTICLE THREE

### CHURCH PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONS

The church shall maintain programs of Bible teaching, church member training, church leader training, new member orientation; mission education, action and support; and music education, training, and performance. All organization related to the church programs shall be guided by the church body. All

officers shall be elected by the church and report regularly to the church. All program activities shall be subject to church coordination and approval. The church shall provide the human resources, the physical resources, and the financial resources for these programs.

Church programs shall include but are not limited to: Bible Study, Discipleship, Missions organization (WMU, Baptist Men, RA's, GA's, Mission Friends, and Church Music.)

## ARTICLE FOUR

### CHURCH PROGRAM SERVICES

The church shall maintain media center and recreation services for the purpose of enriching and extending the ministries and programs of the church.

- 1) The media center will be the resource center for the church. Its personnel will seek to provide and promote the use of printed and audiovisual resources. They will also provide consultation to church leaders and members in the use of printed and audiovisual resources.
- 2) The church recreation service will seek to meet the recreational needs of members and groups. Its personnel will provide recreation activities, consultation, leadership assistance, and resources.

## ARTICLE FIVE

### CHURCH COUNCIL

The church council shall serve the church by leading in the planning, coordinating, conducting, and evaluating the ministries and programs of the church and its organizations.

The primary function of the church council shall be to recommend to the church suggested objectives and church goals; to review and coordinate ministry and program plans recommended by church officers, organization, and committees; to recommend to the church the use of leadership, calendar time, and other resources according to program priorities; and to evaluate achievements in terms of church objectives and goals.

The church council shall include the pastor, other church staff members, directors of church program organizations, chairman of deacons, church officers, and others the church feels are needed to accomplish the tasks.

All matters agreed upon by the council which call for action not already approved shall be referred to the church for action.

## ARTICLE SIX

### CHURCH ORDINANCES

#### Section 1: Baptism

This church shall receive for baptism any person who has publicly professed faith in Jesus Christ as Savior during any worship service, and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord.

- 1) Baptism shall be by immersion in water
- 2) The pastor, or any one so designated by the church shall administer baptism
- 3) Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service of the church
- 4) A person who professes Christ and is not baptized within a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by the pastor and/or staff or deacons. If the individual indicates that they are reluctant to follow the Lord in baptism their name shall be deleted from those awaiting baptism

#### Section 2: The Lord's Supper

The church shall observe the Lord's Supper \_\_\_\_\_, on the \_\_\_\_\_ Sunday of the \_\_\_\_\_, unless otherwise scheduled by the church. The observance shall alternate between the morning and evening services of worship. The pastor and deacons shall administer the Lord's Supper, the deacons shall be responsible for the physical preparations.

## ARTICLE SEVEN

### CHURCH MEETINGS

#### Section 1: Worship Services

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday evening for

worship. The pastor shall direct the services.

## **Section 2: Special Services**

Revival services and other church meetings essential to the advancement of the church's objectives shall be placed on the church calendar.

## **Section 3: Regular Business Meetings**

The church shall hold regular business meeting monthly (bi-monthly or quarterly) on a designated \_\_\_\_\_. (specify day of week)

## **Section 4: Special Business Meetings**

The church may conduct called business meetings to consider matters of special nature and significance. Notice of Special Called Business Meetings must be published and announced at least one week before the meeting is to take place, unless extreme urgency makes such notice impractical. The notice shall include the subject, date, time and place; and it must be given in a way that all resident members have opportunity to be made aware of the meeting.

## **Section 5: Quorum**

The quorum consists of those members who attend the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called.

## **Section 6: Parliamentary Rules**

*Roberts Rules of Order, Revised*, is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church.

## **ARTICLE EIGHT**

### **CHURCH FINANCES**

#### **Section 1: Budget**

The finance or stewardship committee, in consultation with the church council, shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by item the amount needed for local and other expenses. Offering envelopes will be provided for members.

It is understood that membership in this church involves financial obligation to support the church and its causes with regular, proportionate gifts.

#### **Section 2: Accounting Procedures**

All funds received for any and all purposes shall pass through the church treasurer, or financial secretary, and be properly recorded. Those who have responsibility that involves actual handling of funds shall be bonded, the church paying the bond. (See Article Two; Section 1; 6), regarding the church treasurer.

A system of accounting that will adequately provide for the handling of all funds shall be the responsibility of the finance or stewardship committee.

The treasurer or financial secretary shall provide an accurate accounting at the end of each year to those members who have contributed during the year.

## **ARTICLE NINE**

### **CHURCH POLICY MANUAL**

The church shall develop and keep an updated Church Policy Manual. This manual may be developed by a special committee or by the personnel committee as directed by the church. This manual should include church policies and procedures, organizational charts indicating lines of responsibility to be used in the administration of the church. The manual shall be maintained in the church office by the church secretary and made available for use by any member of the church. The church council, personnel



committee or a special committee formed for that purpose, shall review the manual at least annually, and shall recommend changes for the church to consider at any regular or a called business meeting for that purpose. Any church member or church organization may initiate suggested changes in the manual.

Addition, revision, or deletion of church policies requires: (1) the recommendation of the church officer or organization to whose areas of assignment the procedures or policies relate, (2) approval by the church council, and (3) approval by the church.

## **ARTICLE TEN**

### **AMENDMENTS**

Changes in the constitution and by-laws may be made at any regular business meeting of the church provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous business meeting and copies of the proposed amendment shall have been furnished to each member present at the time the amendments were first presented. Amendments to the constitution shall be by a two-thirds vote of church members present. Amendments to the by-laws shall be adopted by a majority vote of the members present and voting.

## **ARTICLE ELEVEN**

### **DISSOLUTION**

In the event the church ceases to exist, any remaining assets shall be conveyed to a similar non-profit organization qualifying for tax exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or as they may hereafter be amended.

*NOTE: A church may wish to specify a preference regarding which entity would receive the assets of the church in the event of dissolution.*

Notes: