

***Emmanuel Baptist Church  
Raleigh, North Carolina***

***Constitution and By-laws***

***Adopted  
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## *Emmanuel Baptist Church Constitution and By-laws*

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### Our Prayer

5 Almighty God and Heavenly Father, Creator of all and to whom all praise, honor, and glory are  
6 due, we humbly approach you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We have  
7 assembled ourselves together through the help of your Holy Spirit and the Holy Scriptures to  
8 unite as a local church under the name Emmanuel Baptist Church. It is our utmost desire to  
9 bring glory to your name as we gather for worship, love one another in fellowship and service,  
10 and make disciples by spreading your gospel throughout the world. As a church, we do hereby  
11 organize ourselves and adopt this Constitution and By-laws as our articles of governance. Help  
12 us to uphold it as we reflect the character of Jesus Christ as he has been revealed to us in the  
13 Old and New Testaments of your inspired and authoritative Word, the Bible. Amen.

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### Preamble

16 Since it pleased Almighty God, by His Holy Spirit, to call certain servants to unite here in 1950  
17 under the name Emmanuel Baptist Church, for the worship of God and the spread of the gospel  
18 of Jesus Christ to sustain and prosper this work to the present day; and

19 Whereas we, the members of Emmanuel Baptist Church (Raleigh, North Carolina), Inc., having  
20 searched the Scriptures under the guidance of His Spirit, have recognized the need to replace  
21 the By-laws to conform more closely to His will for the Church and to prepare ourselves for  
22 greater efforts in His name;

23 Now therefore we, the members of Emmanuel Baptist Church (Raleigh, North Carolina) Inc., do  
24 hereby adopt these By-laws as our articles of governance, to be interpreted at all times to  
25 reflect the character of and bring glory to Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Holy Bible and  
26 articulated in the standards set forth in this church's Statement of Faith.

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### Article 1 - Name

The name of this church is Emmanuel Baptist Church. For the purpose of this Constitution and By-laws, Emmanuel Baptist Church shall be referred to as “EBC” and shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of North Carolina.

### Article 2 - Purpose

This church exists to delight in, display, and declare the glory of God, equipping His people to spread that delight to all nations through Jesus Christ.

This church seeks to accomplish this purpose by loving God and obeying His commands through:

- Worshiping Him;
- Equipping the saints through Bible instruction and study for the work of the ministry and personal, transformative sanctification (Philippians 2:12–13; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 4:1; Colossians 3:1-17);
- Proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ through preaching, personal evangelism, and any other means consistent with the teachings of Holy Scripture;
- Encouraging, supporting, and participating in missions work locally, domestically, and internationally;
- Administering the ordinances of believer’s baptism by immersion, and of communion;
- Encouraging Biblical fellowship among believers;
- Serving other individuals, families, and churches by providing for physical, emotional, and spiritual needs in the name of Jesus Christ;
- Seeking fellowship with God through prayer and supplication.

## 1 Article 3 - Statement of Faith

### 2 Section 3.1. The Baptist Faith & Message 2000

3 We affirm that the Holy Bible is the inspired word of God and is the basis for our beliefs and  
4 actions. Emmanuel Baptist Church (EBC) subscribes to the doctrinal statement of The Baptist  
5 Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000.

### 6 Section 3.2. Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality

7 We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These  
8 two distinct, complementary genders reflect the image and nature of God (Genesis 1:26–27).  
9 Rejection of one’s birth sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

10 We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning: the uniting of one biological man  
11 and one biological woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Genesis 2:18–  
12 25). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman  
13 who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual  
14 activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman (1 Corinthians 6:18;  
15 7:2–5; Hebrews 13:4).

16 We believe that any form of sexual immorality, as defined by the Bible (including adultery,  
17 fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography)  
18 is sinful and offensive to God (Matthew 15:18–20; 1 Corinthians 6:9–10).

19 We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of EBC as the local Body of  
20 Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to EBC’s members and to the community, it is  
21 imperative that all persons employed by EBC in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree  
22 to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality (Matthew 5:16; Philippians  
23 2:14–16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22).

24 We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin,  
25 seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19–21; Romans 10:9–10; 1  
26 Corinthians 6:9–11).

27 We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity  
28 (Mark 12:28–31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing speech, behavior, or attitudes directed  
29 toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the  
30 doctrines of EBC.

### 31 Section 3.3. Statement on the Sanctity of Human Life

32 We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of  
33 inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or  
34 mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural  
35 death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life (Psalm 139).

### 1 Section 3.4. Statement of Final Authority

2 The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the  
3 inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality,  
4 and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For  
5 purposes of EBC's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our elders, collectively, are  
6 EBC's final interpretive authority on the Bible's application (2 Timothy 2:14–26; 3:16–17; Acts  
7 15; Hebrews 13:17; 2 Peter 1:20–21).

### 8 Section 3.5. The Church

9 We believe in the universal church, a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head, and all  
10 born-again persons are members. We believe local churches are the visible expression of the  
11 universal church on earth. The local church is an autonomous congregation of baptized  
12 believers who covenant themselves together under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The church is  
13 to gather regularly for God-centered worship, be committed to the teachings of the Bible,  
14 exercise gifts for the work of service, and enjoy common fellowship and unity in the Holy Spirit.  
15 Every church member has the responsibility to give faithfully of his or her time, talents, and  
16 material possessions to support the mission and ministries of the church. The church is to obey  
17 the Lord's Great Commission to make disciples from all nations and to multiply churches all  
18 over the earth. (Matthew 18:15–17; 28:16–20; John 20:21–23; 2 Corinthians 8–9; Galatians 6:1–  
19 2; Philippians 4:10–19; 1 Timothy 3:1–12)

### 20 Practices Consistent with the Church's Mission

21 To be consistent with its religious mission, the Church shall not

- 22 (1) Establish any public or private policies or positions that conflict with the Statement of  
23 Faith;
- 24 (2) Elect or appoint any elder or officer who has not subscribed to and annually affirmed the  
25 Statement of Faith;
- 26 (3) Accept or recognize any person as a member who is unwilling to affirm the Statement of  
27 Faith;
- 28 (4) Hire or continue to employ any employee who, upon the request of the elders, refuses  
29 to subscribe to the Statement of Faith, or who has acted in a manner inconsistent with  
30 the Statement of Faith or the religious mission of the Church, and has not fully and  
31 properly repented of such action.

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## Article 4 - Ordinances

### Section 4.1. Baptism

This church may receive for baptism any person who has received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior by personal faith, who professes Him publicly, and who, under the elders' shepherding, confirms a commitment to follow Christ as Lord (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:41).

Baptism will be by immersion in water.

The lead pastor and elders, or whomever they will authorize, will administer baptism. Baptism will be administered as an act of worship. (See the paragraphs on baptism in [Section 7.2](#) and [Section 7.3](#))

### Section 4.2. The Lord's Supper

The church will observe the Lord's Supper as often as is determined by the elders, in remembrance of Jesus and to proclaim His death until He returns (1 Corinthians 11:24–26). The lead pastor, or whomever he or the elders will authorize, will lead in observing the Lord's Supper.

### Section 4.3. Baptism and the Lord's Supper in Summary

There are two ordinances instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ for the local church to regularly celebrate—Believer's Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism is the immersion in water of a confessing believer, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, signifying a believer's death to sin and resurrection to new life in Christ. Water baptism is an act of obedience to Christ's command and a commitment to live in light of his Lordship. It also serves as an entry into the local church.

The Lord's Supper is a regular, congregational act of worship, instituted by Jesus Christ to take a portion of bread and receive the cup as symbols of the Lord's sacrificial death for his people on the cross. The Lord's Supper allows the local church to confess sin, seek purity, display unity, center itself upon the cross of Christ, and anticipate the Lord's glorious return. Self-discipline is encouraged during the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Church discipline, if it unfortunately reaches the final lamentable steps, may be enacted during the Lord's Supper. If so, it will be conducted according to scriptural principles under the oversight of the elders. (Matthew 4:16,17; 18:15–20; Mark 14:22–25; Acts 2:38; Romans 10:8–10; 1 Corinthians 11:23–34).



## Article 5 - Church Covenant

- 1
- 2 Having been led as we believe by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord
- 3 and Savior, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father,
- 4 and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,
- 5 We do now in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into
- 6 covenant with one another as one body in Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12);
- 7 We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love (Ephesians
- 8 5:2);
- 9 To strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort (Philippians
- 10 1:27; Isaiah 51:7,12);
- 11 To wholly commit to seek the salvation of the lost and to be ambassadors for Christ on Earth
- 12 (Luke 19:10);
- 13 To promote its health and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, doctrines, and
- 14 discipline (Romans 12:6–8);
- 15 To not forsake the practice of gathering together as a body (Hebrews 10:25);
- 16 To promote a church of “every tribe, tongue, and nation” (Revelation 5:9–10), reflective of the
- 17 kingdom of heaven (Acts 10:34);
- 18 To commit ourselves to willful submission to the authorities of leadership within the church
- 19 (Hebrews 13:17);
- 20 To recognize the church’s sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin (Colossians
- 21 1:15–16);
- 22 To contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the
- 23 church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel throughout all nations (2
- 24 Corinthians 9:7);
- 25 We also strive to maintain family and personal devotions; to educate our children; to seek the
- 26 salvation of our kindred and acquaintances (Proverbs 22:6);
- 27 To walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and
- 28 exemplary in our deportment (Psalm 112:5);
- 29 To avoid all tattling, backbiting, gossiping, and sinful anger (Psalm 37:8; Proverbs 16:28; 1
- 30 Timothy 5:13 Ephesians 4:26);
- 31 To use our influence to combat the abuse of drugs and alcohol and the spread of pornography
- 32 and other practices which lead to moral and spiritual decay (2 Timothy 3:1–5);
- 33 We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love (Romans 12:10);
- 34 To remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate
- 35 Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech (James 5:15–18);

1 To be slow to take offense, and to always be ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of  
2 our Savior to secure it without delay (James 1:19);

3 We moreover engage that when we remove from this place, we will as soon as possible unite  
4 with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of  
5 God's Word (Hebrews 10:25).

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## Article 6 - Church Relationships

This church is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches.

This church will cooperate with and support the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and the Southern Baptist Convention, insofar as such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

## Article 7 - Membership

### Section 7.1. Membership Defined

Members are defined as any persons that have completed the membership process detailed in [Section 7.3](#) and are living in covenant fellowship with the body of Emmanuel Baptist Church. Each member is afforded all privileges of a member as detailed in [Section 7.4](#). If, for over a year's time, a member has not been active in the church either through attendance, giving, or serving, and every attempt by the elders to contact them has failed, the elders may recommend to the church that they be removed from membership. Upon the decision by the church, the member will be removed from the membership of Emmanuel Baptist Church. Exceptions will be made in the case of those serving in the mission field, serving with the military, limited by health concerns, or other reasons as deemed appropriate by the elders of the church.

### Section 7.2. Methods of Receiving New Members

Members will be received into the fellowship of Emmanuel Baptist Church in one of the following ways:

#### By Baptism by Immersion

Those coming upon a profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, as candidates for believer's baptism;

Those coming from a church of another denomination if that church practices a form or understanding of baptism different than that of EBC. (Romans 6:1-4)

#### By Letter

By letter from another church, Southern Baptist or otherwise, indicating that the candidate was a member in good standing and has received believer's baptism by immersion.

#### By Statement

When no letter is obtainable, a candidate may be received for membership by giving evidence of prior conversion experience and baptism by immersion, provided such persons affirm the Church Covenant in [Article 5](#).

### Section 7.3. Membership Process

Any person desiring to become a member of this church shall fulfill the following requirements:

#### Belief in Jesus Christ

Each person desiring to become a member of this church must believe in Jesus Christ alone for salvation from their sin (John 1:12; John 3:16; Ephesians 2:8-9) and manifest fruit of the spirit (Ephesians 2:10).

#### Baptism

Each person desiring to become a member of this church must be, or have been, baptized as a believer, by immersion, in accordance with the teachings of Scripture (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 18:8).

## 1 Membership Interview

2 Each person desiring to become a member of this church must complete a membership  
3 interview with at least one of the elders. This interview will be conducted with the intent to  
4 discern the genuineness of the candidate's belief in the gospel of Jesus Christ. In order to  
5 protect both the name of Jesus Christ and the reputation of this church, this time will be used  
6 to ensure that there is no known sin of which the candidate refuses to demonstrate  
7 repentance. Sin which a person knows of and is unwilling to repent of renders that person  
8 ineligible to become a member. Finally, the membership interview will be used to discuss and  
9 complete all relevant membership forms.

## 10 Covenant Commitment

11 Once all membership requirements have been met, each person must be presented to the  
12 church for their membership to be affirmed by at least three-quarters of the members present.

## 13 Congregational Affirmation

14 All members will annually affirm the Church Covenant in [Article 5](#).

## 15 Section 7.4. Privileges of Membership

16 Members will receive oversight and guidance from the elders, as well as the ministry and  
17 spiritual accountability afforded by the membership of the church.

18 Every member not under church discipline may participate in the Lord's Supper as administered  
19 by the church, in accordance with his or her conscience.

20 Every member not under church discipline has the privilege to regularly serve in the various  
21 ministries of the church, as deemed appropriate by the elders.

22 Every member not under church discipline will be eligible for consideration as a candidate for  
23 elective office in the church, subject to scriptural qualifications and other qualifications  
24 specified by the elders.

25 No person who is not a member shall serve in the ministries or offices of the church. However,  
26 non-members may occasionally be allowed to serve in a limited and temporary capacity as  
27 determined by the elders, though not in the Biblical office of pastor / elder or deacon.

## 28 Section 7.5. Ministry of Membership

29 In accord with the duties enumerated in the Church Covenant, each member shall be privileged  
30 and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of the church, consistent  
31 with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God.  
32 The church may employ non-members for purposes of administration and professional  
33 consultation.

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36 *(Section 7.5 continues on next page)*

- 1 Under Christ, EBC is held in covenant by its members. Therefore, it is the privilege and  
2 responsibility of members to attend members' meetings and potentially vote on:
- 3 - The election of officers; the removal, if necessary, of officers
  - 4 - Decisions regarding membership status, including church discipline; approval of the  
5 annual budget and expenditures outside of the budget, including designated funds from  
6 restricted accounts (such expenditures shall be made available for review by the church at  
7 members' meetings);
  - 8 - Approval of any transactions regarding real property;
  - 9 - Matters submitted by the membership of the church, by the elders, or raised by a motion  
10 at a member's meeting;
  - 11 - Changes to the By-laws;
  - 12 - Other matters as may be submitted by the elders to the church for a vote.

### 13 [Section 7.6. Termination of Membership](#)

14 Termination of membership shall be recognized by the church following the death or voluntary  
15 resignation of any church member. Membership may be terminated as an act of church  
16 discipline at the recommendation of the elders and with at least three quarters vote of the  
17 members at any regular or special meeting of the members.

### 18 [Section 7.7. Membership Withdrawal Refusal](#)

19 The church shall have authority to refuse a member's voluntary resignation or transfer of  
20 membership to another church, either for the purpose of proceeding with a process of church  
21 discipline, or for any other reason that the church, upon the recommendation of the elders,  
22 deems necessary or prudent.

### 23 [Section 7.8. Associate Members](#)

24 Students and others temporarily residing in the Raleigh area may be received as associates of  
25 the church, provided they are members in good standing of another evangelical baptistic  
26 church.

27 An Applicant shall be received as an associate upon the recommendation of the Elders and the  
28 subsequent agreement of at least three quarters of the members present and voting on the  
29 question at any members' Meeting.

30 Associates shall retain membership in one other evangelical and baptistic church.

31 Associates shall be expected to participate actively in the life of the church in the same way as  
32 members, except that they shall not be eligible to either serve in any office or to vote.

33 A person's association with the church shall terminate immediately upon the ending of  
34 residence in the Raleigh area or by voluntary resignation. The church shall have authority to  
35 terminate the association of any associate consistently neglectful of his or her duties, or guilty  
36 of scandalous conduct by which the reputation of Christ or His church is dishonored. In such an  
37 event, the Elders shall refer disciplinary action to the pastor or elders of the excluded person's  
38 home church.

1 Section 7.9. Meaningful Membership

2 Each member is expected to faithfully participate in body life in such a way that they fulfill the  
3 nearly 100 “one another’s” of the New Testament epistles written to the Church for the benefit  
4 of spiritual growth and mutual care. This member mutuality greatly assists the elders in their  
5 shepherding care of the church.

6 Section 7.10. The Biblical Basis for Church Discipline

7 From Jesus, the Head of the Church, we learn in Matthew 18 that Jesus’ community of believers  
8 should not so despise any person in their community so as to callously allow them to stray  
9 without radically pursuing them, because God will not let any who are His perish.

10 In Matthew 18:15–20, Jesus outlines the following steps of Church Discipline:

11 Step #1: In a covenant community, the danger of even one member should lead to a  
12 confidential, personal conversation (v. 15).

13 Step #2: If the one in danger won’t listen, a small number of others joins to ensure that the  
14 concern is legitimate (v. 16).

15 Step #3: If the one in danger rejects these confidential measures, the entire covenanted  
16 community must be made aware (v. 17a).

17 Step #4: If he refuses to listen to his covenant community, then the community can no  
18 longer affirm him in covenant (v. 17b)

19 God tells His church through the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 5, that the aforementioned steps  
20 of Church Discipline must be practiced:

21 1. For the Sake of the Sinner (v. 5)

22 For the “destruction of his flesh” and the salvation of his spirit on the day of the  
23 Lord (v. 5).

24 2. For the Sake of the Church (vv. 6–7a)

25 For the purity of the church as a whole (vv. 6–7a).

26 3. For the Sake of Jesus Christ (vv. 7b–8)

27 For the purity of the Name of Jesus Christ—especially in the ordinance of  
28 Communion (vv. 7b–8).

29 **Question:** What is the church’s responsibility towards those without and those within (the  
30 church)?

31 Without ⇒ The Church and the Wicked World

32 The church must appropriately live with and seek to reach the wickedly living  
33 world (vv. 9–10).

34 Within ⇒ The Church and those who Claim Christ but Refuse to Obey Christ

35 The church must separate from those who claim Christ but live ungodly lives (vv.  
36 11–13).

1 [Section 7.11. Church Discipline – Correcting Dangerous Sin](#)

2 Any member consistently neglectful of his or her Scriptural duties as embodied in the  
3 Statement of Faith ([Article 3](#)) or Church Covenant ([Article 5](#)) in this Constitution and By-laws, or  
4 who is otherwise guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be  
5 dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the church, shall be subject to the admonition of  
6 the elders and the discipline of the church. Any such action shall be done in accordance with  
7 Matthew 18:15–17, 1 Corinthians 5:1–5, and 2 Corinthians 2:6–8.

8 Church discipline can include admonition by the elders or church, suspension from  
9 participation in the Lord’s Supper for a definite period, removal from office or ministry, and/or  
10 dismissal from membership. (Matthew 18:15–17; 2 Thessalonians 3:14–15; 1 Timothy 5:19–20;  
11 1 Corinthians 5:4–5)

12 If private efforts to bring about the member’s repentance and reconciliation are unsuccessful,  
13 one or more members or elders shall bring the matter to the attention of the elders. The elders  
14 shall review and investigate the matter. After prayer and deliberation, the elders may

- 15 (a) dismiss the matter,  
16 (b) take disciplinary action (other than termination of membership, which may only be  
17 effected by a vote of the church), or  
18 (c) submit the matter to the members at a duly convened members’ meeting for a decision.

19 A member shall be removed from membership as a matter of church discipline upon the  
20 recommendation of the elders and the subsequent approval of at least three quarters of the  
21 members present and voting on the question at any members’ meeting.

22 If the members vote to discipline the member, it may be announced to the members in order  
23 that they may carry out the Biblical admonition to work towards bringing about repentance and  
24 restoration of the disciplined member. Members who have been dismissed from membership  
25 by the church shall be restored to full membership privileges according to the spirit of 2  
26 Corinthians 2:7–8 when their conduct is judged by the elders and the members to be in  
27 accordance with the Statement of Faith, the Church Covenant, and Biblical repentance.

28 The church shall have authority to refuse a member’s voluntary resignation from membership  
29 for the purpose of proceeding with a process of church discipline, to protect that member from  
30 following false teaching, or for any other reason the church deems necessary or prudent ([see](#)  
31 [Article 7, Section 7](#)). In these instances, the church has the right and responsibility to bring any  
32 disciplinary process to an orderly conclusion, and to make final determination as to the  
33 person’s membership status in connection with that process.

34 If a member departs from EBC while under church discipline, and thereafter attends another  
35 church, the elders may inform that church of the pending discipline and the grounds for that  
36 action. This may be done in order to encourage the brother or sister to repent and be restored  
37 to the Lord and to any people he or she has sinned against. The elders may also warn the other  
38 church to be on guard against the individual’s conduct or beliefs and any risk of harm that he or  
39 she might present to the other church. See Ephesians 4:1–6.

40



## Article 8 - Meetings

### Section 8.1. Worship Gatherings

Worship gatherings shall be held each Lord's Day and may be held throughout the week as the elders determine.

### Section 8.2. Members' Meetings

In every meeting together, members shall act in a spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration, all of which are appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There shall be a regular members' meeting at least every quarter, at a time set by the elders.

Members' meetings shall be held in person, unless deemed as impossible by the elders.

A moderator designated by the elders shall preside at all members' meetings of the church. The elders shall see that the stated meetings of the church are regularly held and that required reports are submitted to the church by the responsible members.

A quorum shall be understood to be met by those members present. All votes shall be tallied based on the number of votes cast by members present. In the event of a written ballot, the elders will be responsible for counting the votes. The affirmative vote of a majority of members present at the meeting, entitled to vote, and voting on any matter, will be deemed the act of the members, unless otherwise specifically noted in these By-laws.

A budget shall be approved by the membership at a members' meeting, no more than three months and no less than one month prior to the start of the fiscal year.

The church, duly assembled in a members' meeting, may be required to: elect officers; receive applicants into church membership; recognize termination of membership due to death or voluntary resignation; exercise church discipline; approve a church budget; hear reports from the elders and, from time to time, the various deacons, or any other duly recognized speaker; take any other action the church deems necessary or desirable.

Special members' meetings may be called as required by the elders or at the written request, submitted to the elders, of five percent of the membership. The date, time, and purpose of any special meeting shall be announced at a Lord's Day worship service of the church at least two weeks prior to the meeting. In the event of a written request from the members, the elders shall call a special meeting to be held within one month of their receipt of the request.

Discussion and business conducted at a special members' meeting is restricted to the topic for which the special meeting was called.

### Section 8.3. Elders' Meetings

The elders shall annually elect a chairman of elders' meetings by a majority of elders present. Meetings of the elders shall be conducted in accordance with the Constitution and By-laws and any procedures adopted by the elders. Unless otherwise required by the Constitution and By-laws or any procedures adopted by the elders, the act of the majority of the elders present at a

1 meeting (at which a quorum is present) shall be the act of the elders. A quorum of elders shall  
2 consist of three-quarters of the elders of the church.

3 Due to the personal nature of shepherding, elders' meetings should normally be attended by  
4 the elders in-person. Though less than ideal, of occasional necessity, elders may participate in a  
5 meeting of the elders or any committee by use of a conference telephone or similar means of  
6 communication, whereby participants can simultaneously hear each other. Participation by  
7 such means shall constitute presence in person at such meetings. When such a meeting is  
8 conducted by using a conference telephone or similar means of communication, a written  
9 record shall be made of the action taken at the meeting, noting those participating by  
10 electronic means.

11 Any action by the elders, whether required or permitted, may be taken without a meeting if a  
12 majority of the elders, individually or collectively, consent to the action. Such action shall have  
13 the same force and effect as a vote of the elders at a regular meeting.

14

## Article 9 - Officers & Other Positions

### Section 9.1. Summary

There are two scriptural offices in the local church: Elder and Deacon. The New Testament uses interchangeably three terms to describe the office of elder: elder / pastor / overseer (1 Peter 5:1–4; Acts 20:17, 28). The most commonly used term for this office in the NT is “elder.” The elders are presented as a plurality in the NT, and they are charged with overall spiritual responsibility, oversight, and leadership of the local church before God. The elders are responsible for teaching the scriptures, and they interpret and enforce the church’s statement of faith. Deacons are chosen by the Elders from among the members and are to function as servants to the church, assisting the elders in caring for church members and church ministries. (Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1–13; 1 Peter 5:1–3)

In addition, Emmanuel Baptist Church, under these By-laws, recognizes the administrative positions of trustees, clerk, and treasurer. Trustees are the legal officers of the church.

All persons filling administrative positions and biblical offices must be members of Emmanuel Baptist Church prior to assuming their responsibilities.

### Section 9.2. Biblical Role of the Elders

To Shepherd the Flock - Serving in all humility, elders are to guide, direct, guard and protect the members of the body, seeking to meet their needs and assist in any way possible, warning against harmful influences and guarding against false teachers. (Acts 20:28ff; 1 Peter 5:1–3)

To Lead Through Example - Elders are to provide a scriptural role-model and are to set a pattern before the flock of a rightly-ordered life—with a single purpose to glorify God. (1 Peter 5:3)

To Teach and Exhort - Elders are to see the flock is fed through insightful and accurate Biblical instruction and admonition. (1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:9)

To Refute Those Who Contradict Truth - Elders are to confront those who are teaching what they should not teach or are continuing a pattern of behavior contradictory to biblical truth. Thus, elders are to keep closing potential entrances for Satan, so that the truth of Christ will remain credible to both the church and the community (Acts 20:29–31; Titus 1:9)

To Manage the Church of God - Elders are to oversee the life of the church. They will oversee the ministry and resources of the church in accordance with the Word of God as “good leaders” and assure the right practice of the ordinances (1 Timothy 3:5; 5:7).

To Pray for the Sick - Elders are to pray for the spiritual and physical well-being of members of the church. (James 5:14)

### Section 9.3. Biblical Ministry of the Elders

In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1–6 and 1 Peter 5:1–4, the elders shall devote their time to prayer, to the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and to shepherding God’s flock. In scripture, without exception, elders are men.

1 The elders shall take particular responsibility to:

- 2 Examine and instruct prospective members,
- 3 Examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions,
- 4 Oversee the work of deacons and appointed church agents and committees,
- 5 Conduct worship services,
- 6 Administer the ordinances of believer's baptism by immersion and communion,
- 7 Equip the membership for the work of the ministry,
- 8 Encourage sound doctrine and practice,
- 9 Promote growth in Christ-like maturity,
- 10 Admonish and correct error,
- 11 Oversee the process of church discipline,
- 12 Coordinate and promote the ministries of the church,
- 13 Mobilize the church for world missions,
- 14 Manage the budget, and
- 15 Care for/provide counseling to the members.

16 The elders are to ensure that all who minister the Word to the church, including outside  
17 speakers, share our fundamental convictions.

18 The elders may establish ministry positions or committees to assist them in fulfilling their  
19 responsibilities. Committees may be formed and disbanded by the elders. All committee  
20 members and chairpersons will be approved by the elders. The elders may also propose funding  
21 for new paid staff positions. The elders may give authority to the staff pastors to define job  
22 descriptions, hire, manage, and terminate additional staff positions.

23 The elders shall have primary responsibility for the employment, supervision, and evaluation of  
24 staff members. This responsibility may be delegated to another staff member. The elders shall  
25 elect a chairman of elders' meetings and shall also elect one of their number or another  
26 member to serve as moderator of members' meetings.

#### 27 [Section 9.4. Congregational Recognition or Removal of Elders](#)

28 The elders shall be comprised of the number of gifted and qualified men who satisfy the  
29 qualifications for the office of elder set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:6–9. No elder shall  
30 hold the office of deacon during his tenure. The number of elders shall finally be determined by  
31 the active elders (Acts 14:21–23; Titus 1:5). The church shall recognize men gifted and willing to  
32 serve in this calling (Galatians 1:6–9) in accordance with the provisions on Elections in [Article](#)  
33 [10](#).

34 The term of office for an elder, other than the lead, associate, and assistant pastor / elder, is  
35 three years. An elder other than the lead, associate, and assistant pastor(s), may serve for two  
36 consecutive three-year terms, and cannot be re-elected to serve again as an elder without a  
37 one-year year sabbatical from service. This is to ensure he receives necessary rest. The  
38 members should receive these men as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as elders  
39 (Numbers 8:19, Ephesians 4:7–13).

1 Elders should see themselves as servants of the church, not lording it over those entrusted to  
2 them, but being examples to the church (1 Peter 5:3). Elders who disqualify themselves through  
3 unrepentant persistence in sin shall be removed by the church in accordance with the  
4 instruction of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17 and 1 Timothy 5:19–20.

#### 5 [Section 9.5. The Lead Pastor / Elder](#)

6 The lead pastor shall be an elder in the employ of the church. He shall perform the duties of an  
7 elder described in Section 9.3 above and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted  
8 and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching.

9 He shall not be subject to the triennial reaffirmation or to the term limitation set out in Article  
10 9, [Section 9.4](#), for elders. His call shall be defined as per Article 10, [Section 10.3](#).

11 He shall have charge of the preaching and teaching ministry of the church, administer the  
12 ordinances of believer's baptism by immersion and communion, and perform such other duties  
13 as usually pertain to that office, or as set forth in the By-laws.

14 In the absence or incapacity of the lead pastor for either a permanent or defined period of time  
15 (such as sabbatical or illness), the elders shall assume the ultimate responsibility for his duties,  
16 any of which may be delegated to an associate pastor.

#### 17 [Section 9.6. Associate Pastor\(s\) / Elder\(s\)](#)

18 The church may call additional pastors whose relationship to the lead pastor is that of  
19 associate.

20 An associate pastor shall be an elder in the employ of the church. He shall perform the duties of  
21 an elder described in [Section 9.3](#) above and shall be recognized by the church as particularly  
22 gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching.

23 His call shall not be subject to the triennial reaffirmation or to the term limitation set out in  
24 Article 9, [Section 9.4](#), for elders. His call shall be defined as per Article 10, [Section 10.3](#).

25 He shall assist the lead pastor in the performance of his regular duties and shall perform any  
26 other duties that usually pertain to the office of pastor, or as set forth in the By-laws, or which  
27 may be specifically assigned to him by the elders.

#### 28 [Section 9.7. Assistant Pastor\(s\) / Elder\(s\)](#)

29 The church may call additional pastors, whose relationship to the lead pastor is that of  
30 assistant.

31 An assistant pastor shall be an elder in the employ of the church. He shall perform the duties of  
32 an elder described in [Section 9.3](#) above and shall be recognized by the church as particularly  
33 gifted and called to full-time ministry. His call shall not be subject to the triennial reaffirmation  
34 or to the term limitation set out in Article 9, [Section 9.4](#), for elders. His call shall be defined as  
35 per Article 10, [Section 10.4](#).

1 He shall assist the lead pastor and associate pastor(s) in the performance of their regular duties  
2 and shall perform any other duties as usually pertain to the office of pastor, or as set forth in  
3 the By-laws, or which may be specifically assigned to him by the elders.

#### 4 [Section 9.8. Additional Staff](#)

5 The elders may hire additional staff to assist with pastoral ministry or administration. The elders  
6 shall define the responsibilities for additional staff positions. On a case-by-case basis, the hiring  
7 of additional staff may be delegated after the elders have defined the responsibilities for the  
8 additional staff position. The initial funding for paid staff positions must be approved by the  
9 membership at a members' meeting.

#### 10 [Section 9.9. Biblical Role of the Deacons](#)

11 Serve the Flock – The office of deacon came into existence to serve the church in tangible,  
12 practical matters (Acts 6:1–6).

13 Exemplify Service – One must be “tested first” (1 Timothy 3:10) before being recognized to the  
14 office of deacon because deacons exemplify Christlike service to the church.

15 Promote Unity – The existence of deacons promotes unity among otherwise fractured groups  
16 of the church (Acts 6:1–6).

17 Alleviate the Burden on Pastors / Elders – Deacons are motivated to serve in part by the need  
18 to enable pastors / elders to “devote themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word” (Acts  
19 6:4).

20 Care for the Church’s Physical Needs – Deacons carry out service enabling the church’s practical  
21 matters to function smoothly (Acts 6:2).

22 Care for those in Great Need – Deacons serve in practical matters for the good of people. Often  
23 diaconate service benefits the neediest (e.g., “widows...being neglected in the daily  
24 distribution,”) (Acts 6:1).

#### 25 [Section 9.10. Biblical Ministry of the Deacons](#)

26 Deacons shall perform duties assigned by the elders, understanding that the biblical role of  
27 deacon is to take care of the physical needs of the church so that the elders can concentrate on  
28 their primary calling. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1–6, the office of deacon  
29 is not a position of spiritual authority.

30 The deacons shall not meet regularly as a body. Each diaconate position shall serve a particular  
31 need of the church and shall be created or dissolved upon the recommendation of the elders  
32 and subsequent approval of a majority of the members present and voting on the question at  
33 any members meeting. Deacons will serve on a rotating basis in assisting the Elders with the  
34 ordinances.

#### 35 [Section 9.11. Congregational Recognition or Removal of Deacons](#)

36 The qualifications for the office of deacon are described in 1 Timothy 3:8–13. The church shall  
37 recognize, in accordance with the provisions of elections per Article 10, [Section 10.2](#), men who

1 are giving of themselves in service to the church, and who possess particular gifts of service.  
2 These members shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as a deacon. The  
3 term of office for a deacon is three years. A deacon may serve for two consecutive three-year  
4 terms and cannot be re-elected to serve again as a deacon without a one-year sabbatical from  
5 service. This is to insure he receives necessary rest. Any two members with reason to believe  
6 that a deacon should be dismissed should express such concern to the elders. A deacon may be  
7 removed from office upon the recommendation of the elders and the subsequent agreement of  
8 three-quarters of the members present and voting on the question at any members' meeting.  
9 Any member, regardless of office, could be removed through church discipline ([see section](#)  
10 [7.11](#)).

#### 11 [Section 9.12. Trustees](#)

12 The church shall elect six trustees from among the members to serve as legal officers of the  
13 church.

14 The term of office for a trustee shall be three calendar years, with two new trustees being  
15 elected every year upon the recommendation of the elders. They shall hold in trust the church  
16 property. Upon specific vote of the membership authorizing each action, they shall have the  
17 power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property. When the signatures of  
18 trustees are required, at least four shall sign legal documents involving the sale, mortgage,  
19 purchase, or rental of property, or other legal documents related to church-approved matters.  
20 The trustees shall exercise the utmost good faith in all transactions pertaining to their duties to  
21 the church and its property. They must hold to a strict standard of biblical conduct consistent  
22 with a position as representative of the church. They shall not use their position as trustee or  
23 knowledge gained therefrom such that a conflict of interest might arise between the church's  
24 interests and the trustees'. The trustees shall meet only when necessary to sign documents,  
25 with a quorum established as two-thirds of the active trustees.

26 The church will provide indemnification insurance to cover the expenses associated with a legal  
27 claim or criminal allegation made against a trustee who was acting as an agent of the church.

#### 28 [Section 9.13. Clerk](#)

29 It shall be the duty of the clerk to record the minutes of all regular and special members'  
30 meetings of the church, to preserve an accurate roll of the membership, and to render reports  
31 as requested by the pastor, the elders, the deacons, or the church.

32 The clerk shall be nominated by the elders and elected by the church to serve a term of one  
33 calendar year.

34 In the absence or incapacity of the clerk, the elders shall appoint a member to perform the  
35 duties of the church clerk.

36 The clerk shall ensure that dated copies of the most recent revision of this Constitution and By-  
37 laws shall be available for all church members.

1 Section 9.14. Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer

2 The Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer, neither of which shall be an active elder nor a paid  
3 church staff member, shall ensure that all funds and securities of the church are properly  
4 secured in such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as appropriate. The Treasurer shall  
5 also be responsible for presenting regular reports of the account balances, revenues, and  
6 expenses of the church at each members' meeting. This responsibility may be delegated with  
7 the approval of the elders. The Treasurer shall also ensure that full and accurate accounts of  
8 receipts and disbursements are kept in books belonging to the church, and that adequate  
9 controls are implemented to guarantee that all funds belonging to the church are appropriately  
10 handled by any officer, employee, or agent of the church. The Treasurer shall render to the  
11 elders quarterly, or whenever they may require it, an account of all transactions and of the  
12 financial condition of the church.

13 The Treasurer shall be nominated by the elders and elected by the church. The term of office of  
14 the Treasurer is three years. A Treasurer may serve for two consecutive three-year terms but  
15 cannot be re-elected to serve again as the Treasurer without a one-year sabbatical from  
16 service.

17 The Assistant Treasurer shall be nominated by the elders and elected by the church. The term  
18 of office of the Assistant Treasurer is two years. An Assistant Treasurer may serve for two  
19 consecutive two-year terms but cannot be re-elected to serve again as the Assistant Treasurer  
20 without a one-year sabbatical from service.

21

22 Section 9.15. Accounting and Fiduciary Responsibility

23 The elders of the church have ultimate responsibility of oversight in all matters and shall  
24 conduct their affairs with integrity in the sight of God and men, and shall to that end maintain  
25 prudent and responsible accountability over all funds in accord with the mission of the church  
26 and tax-exempt purposes. To that end, the elders shall ensure that practices, positions,  
27 procedures, or policies exist so that the church serves as a model of faithful stewardship and  
28 quality internal accounting controls and procedures.

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## Article 10 - Elections

### Section 10.1. Principles

The process for church elections shall be interpreted and carried out in accordance with the following principles:

Substantial prayer, both individually and corporately, should be an integral part of the election process;

Nominations should proceed with the support of the elders;

All candidates for church office should be treated with the grace, kindness, and honesty appropriate in evaluating fellow members;

The election process shall express a spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration that is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### Section 10.2. Election of Officers

The election of officers shall be held at a members' meeting of the church. Names of nominees to serve as elders, deacons, trustees, clerk, or treasurer shall be presented by the current elders at a members' meeting at least four weeks prior to the election. The election shall proceed as directed by the moderator.

The elders should seek recommendations and involvement from the general membership in the nomination process. Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified for an office should express such concern to the elders. Members intending to speak in opposition to a candidate should express their objection to the elders as far in advance as possible before the relevant church members' meeting.

The recognition process for elders should include the current elders reminding the church of the biblical qualifications and the work of elders. The current elders will prayerfully consider candidates and invite them to an extensive self-evaluation. Candidates who remain following the self-evaluation will be interviewed by the current elders. Those who best fulfill the biblical requirements for elder will be recommended to the members as nominees. The church will examine the nominee and should bring any concerns or questions about qualifications or ability to the current elders. The church should have no less than four weeks for this evaluation period. Following the examination period, the church will vote on the candidate during a time set aside for dedication and affirmation (and re-affirmation). The moderator shall declare the nominees to be recognized as elders if the vote for the group is at least three-quarters in the affirmative by the members present and voting at a members' meeting. Voting for elders shall be conducted by ballot. Men recognized as non-staff elders begin their duties immediately upon recognition by the church.

For all other offices, the moderator shall declare elected all persons receiving a simple majority of all votes cast; abstentions will not be considered as votes cast. The persons elected shall assume their respective offices at the beginning of the calendar year. If a need or vacancy arises, the elders may hold a special election upon which the person elected will assume office immediately following the election. Officers elected during a special election will serve the

1 office's normal term. If service starts with six months or less in the calendar year, the time in  
2 service will not count towards the first year of the office's term.

### 3 Section 10.3. Calling of a Lead Pastor or an Associate Pastor

4 In the calling of any man to the position of lead pastor or associate pastor, the same basic  
5 process of calling an elder must be followed. Before being asked to express judgment, the  
6 church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential lead  
7 pastor or associate pastor, and must receive assurance from the elders that, having interviewed  
8 the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Statement of  
9 Faith and Church Covenant. Notice of the nomination of a man to be called as lead pastor or  
10 associate pastor (which shall include, if necessary, reception into membership of him and his  
11 wife if he is married) must be given at two Lord's Day worship gatherings following the  
12 nomination, prior to the vote at a members' meeting.

### 13 Section 10.4. Calling of an Assistant Pastor

14 In the calling of any man to the position of assistant pastor, the same basic process of calling an  
15 elder must be followed. Before being asked to express judgment, the church must be given  
16 adequate opportunity to assess the gifts of the individual for the position to which he is called,  
17 and must receive assurance from the elders that, having interviewed the man concerned, they  
18 are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Statement of Faith and Church Covenant.  
19 Notice of the nomination of a man to be called as assistant pastor (which shall include, if  
20 necessary, election to membership of him and his wife if he is married) must be given at two  
21 Lord's Day worship gatherings following the nomination, prior to the vote at a members'  
22 meeting.

23

1 Article 11 – Indemnification

2 Section 11.1. Mandatory Indemnification

3 If a legal claim or criminal allegation is made against a person because he or she is or was an  
4 officer, employee, or agent of the church, the church shall provide indemnification against  
5 liability and costs incurred in defending against the claim if the elders determine that the  
6 person acted

7 (a) in good faith,

8 (b) with the care an ordinarily prudent person in a similar position would exercise under  
9 similar circumstances, and

10 (c) in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in the best interest of the church, and  
11 the person had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful.

12 Section 11.2. Permissive Indemnification

13 At the discretion of the elders, the church also may indemnify any person who acted in good  
14 faith and reasonably believed that his or her conduct was in the church’s best interest and not  
15 unlawful.

16 Section 11.3. Procedure

17 If a quorum of the elders is not available for an indemnification determination because of the  
18 number of elders seeking indemnification, the requisite determination may be made by the  
19 membership or by special legal counsel appointed by the membership.

20

## Article 12 - Peacemaking and Reconciliation

Emmanuel Baptist Church is committed to “maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3) that reflects God’s peace and the power of the gospel of Christ in our lives. We realize that bitterness, unforgiveness, and broken relationships are not appropriate for the people whom God has reconciled to himself through the sacrifice of his only Son. Therefore, we look to the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit for guidance on how we can respond to conflict in a way that will honor God, promote justice, reconcile relationships, and preserve our witness for Christ. As God gives us his wisdom and grace, we are committed to actively teaching and encouraging one another to live out the following principles of peacemaking and reconciliation.

### Section 12.1. Personal Peacemaking

Whenever we are faced with conflict, our primary goal will be to glorify God with our thoughts, words, and actions (1 Corinthians 10:31).

We will try to get the “logs” out of our own eyes before focusing on what others may have done wrong (Matt. 7:3–5).

We will seek to overlook minor offenses (Proverbs 19:11).

We will refrain from all gossip, backbiting, and slander (Ephesians 4:29). If we have a problem with others, we will talk with them, not about them.

We will make “charitable judgments” toward one another by believing the best about each other until we have facts that prove otherwise (1 Corinthians 13:7).

If an offense is too serious to overlook, or if we think someone may have something against us, we will go promptly to seek reconciliation (Matt. 5:23–24; 18:15).

We will approach the Lord’s table only after having earnestly sought reconciliation with our brother or sister (Mark 11:25; Matt. 5:24; 1 Corinthians 11:28; James 3:18).

When we offer a word of correction to others, we will do so graciously and gently, with the goal of serving and restoring them, rather than beating them down (Proverbs 12:18; Ephesians 4:29; Galatians 6:1).

When someone tries to correct us, we will ask God to help us resist prideful defensiveness and to welcome correction with humility (Psalm 141:5; Proverbs 15:32).

When others repent, we will ask God to give us grace to forgive them as he has forgiven us (Ephesians 4:32).

When we discuss or negotiate substantive issues, we will look out for others’ interests as well as our own (Philippians 2:3–4).

### Section 12.2. Assisted Peacemaking

When two of us cannot resolve a conflict privately, we will seek the mediation of wise people in our church and listen humbly to their counsel (Matt. 18:16; Philippians 4:2–3). If our dispute is with an elder, we will look to our other elders for assistance.

When informal mediation does not resolve a dispute, we will seek formal assistance from our elders or people they appoint, and we will submit to their counsel and correction (Matt. 18:17–20).

1 When we have a business or legal dispute with another Christian, we will make every  
2 reasonable effort to resolve the conflict within the body of Christ through biblical  
3 mediation or arbitration, rather than going to civil court (1 Corinthians 6:1–8). If the  
4 other party attends another church, our elders will offer to cooperate with the leaders  
5 of that church to resolve the matter.  
6 If a person coming to our church has an unresolved conflict with someone in his former  
7 church, we will require and assist him to make every reasonable effort to be reconciled  
8 to the other person before joining our church (Matt. 5:23–24; Romans 12:18).  
9 When a conflict involves matters of doctrine or church discipline, we will submit to the  
10 procedures set forth in Article 7, [Section 7.11](#) and Article 3, [Section 3.4](#) of these by-laws.  
11 If we have a legal dispute with our church or within our church and cannot resolve it  
12 internally through the steps given above, we will obey God’s command not to go into  
13 the civil court (1 Corinthians 6:1–8). If it becomes necessary to find outside assistance,  
14 the elders shall pursue a biblically faithful, Christian organization for further mediation.

#### 15 [Section 12.3. Division and Arbitration](#)

16 In the event of a division of this church (from which may God in His mercy save us) the property  
17 of this church shall belong to that group of such division as represents the largest portion of the  
18 church membership before recognizing a division therein, provided such group is loyal to this  
19 constitution; otherwise, it shall belong to the group remaining loyal to this constitution even if  
20 it is not the largest group in such division. If it becomes necessary to find outside assistance, the  
21 elders shall pursue a biblically faithful, Christian organization for further mediation.

#### 22 [Section 12.4. Dissolution of the Church](#)

23 Should a condition arise at any time in the future when, for any reason, the church work cannot  
24 continue, the church property shall be transferred to the Southern Baptist Convention,  
25 provided its continued adherence to the Baptist Faith and Message 2000--or to a church  
26 network with a demonstrably similar, biblically faithful, doctrinal stance to the Baptist Faith and  
27 Message 2000.

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## Article 13 – Amendments

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The elders may propose amendments to the Constitution and By-laws as needed. All proposed

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amendments must be presented in writing and made available to the membership at least

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thirty (30) days prior to a called members' meeting. A three-quarters vote of the members

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present and voting at a members' meeting is required to approve an amendment. The updated

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version of the Constitution and By-laws document will be made available to all members.