

**The Constitution
of
Open Door Baptist Church
of
Morehead City, North Carolina
Inc.**

April 15, 2015

Preamble

This Constitution and Bylaws are made to ensure that Open Door Baptist Church:

1. Preserves and secures the principles of our faith.
2. Preserves the rights and privileges of each individual member of the church.
3. Ensures the independence of the church from any other religious body or organization.
4. Provides for the orderly conduct of internal affairs, in dealing with others, and of governing church members regarding matters of faith.
5. Maintains the integrity and operation of Open Door Baptist Church exclusively under the authority of God.

This Constitution and Bylaws supersede all previous constitutions or other documents governing the activities, management or operation of Open Door Baptist Church, and are effective upon approval of the general membership of Open Door Baptist Church.

Article I. Name.

The name of this church shall be *Open Door Baptist Church of Morehead City, NC, Inc.* In ordinary discourse it shall be called *Open Door Baptist Church*. It shall be affiliated with the Atlantic Baptist Association, the North Carolina State Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention. Hereafter in this document *Open Door Baptist Church* may be referred to as "the church."

Article II. Business location.

The address of the principal office of the church shall be:
227 Highway 24, Morehead City, NC 28557

Article III. Purposes.

The purposes of Open Door Baptist Church are:

- A. To worship God, who alone is worthy of all praise and glory.
- B. To serve God locally, nationally, and in all the world by fulfilling the Great Commission of Jesus Christ as set forth in Matthew 28:19-20, and Acts 1:8.
- C. To minister to the needs of its members and others as the Lord leads the church.
- D. To do any and all things related to and in connection with the carrying out of the purposes of a New Testament Church as described in Acts 2:42.
- E. To encourage church members to remain faithful to the truth of God's Holy Word, without compromise, as commanded in Jude 3.

Article IV. Articles of Faith.

- A. The Bible. We believe the Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God, without any error, the all-sufficient and final authority in matters of faith, doctrine, and Christian living. (See 2 Timothy 3:16-17; John 17:17; Hebrews 6:18.)
- B. One God. We believe in one God, eternally existing in three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (See 2 Thessalonians 1:2; John 1:1-5; John 10:30-33; Acts 5:3-4; 2 Corinthians 3:17; Deuteronomy 6:4; Exodus 20:2-3; Isaiah 43:10-11.)
- C. The Virgin Birth. We believe in the Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ, and that He is truly God and man; He died on the cross for our sins, rose bodily from the dead, and ascended into heaven where He sits at the right hand of God the Father, and is now our High Priest and Advocate. (See Matthew 1:18-23; Colossians 2:9; Philippians 2:5-8; 1 Timothy 2:5; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Peter 3:18; Romans 4:25; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Luke 24:50-51; Acts 1:9-10; Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 2:17; Hebrews 4:14; 1 John 2:1.)
- D. Man's Creation. We believe that man was created in the image of God but fell into sin and is, therefore, lost. Only through belief in Jesus Christ and regeneration by the work of the Holy Spirit can man's salvation from sin be obtained and a spiritual life achieved. (See Genesis 1:27; Romans 3:10-11; Romans 3:23; John 8:24; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5.)
- E. Salvation. We believe that eternal salvation is the free gift of God, entirely apart from man's works, and is possessed by any and all persons who have faith in and receive Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. (See Romans 6:23; Galatians 2:16; John 1:12; John 20:31; 1 John 5:11-13.)
- F. Regeneration. We believe in a regenerated church membership, that is, persons who have demonstrated an understanding of their need for Jesus Christ and, of their own free will, accepted him as their personal Lord and Savior in accordance with 1 Corinthians 12:13, 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, and Romans 10:9-10.

G. Baptism. We believe that baptism is by immersion, as demonstrated by the baptism of Christ, and that the Lord's Supper is a memorial to his suffering and death on the cross. These ordinances will be observed with great reverence by the church in its present age. They do not, however, provide the means for man's salvation. (See Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 22:14-23, Matthew 3:5-6, Mark 1:5.)

H. Christ's Second Coming. We believe in the personal, bodily, imminent, and glorious return of the Lord Jesus Christ and that his second coming inspires believers to dynamic and zealous lives and service for him while waiting for his return. (See Matthew 24:30; Luke 12:40; Revelation 22:12.)

I Resurrection. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead, the everlasting blessedness of the saved with God in heaven, and the everlasting punishment and separation from God of the unsaved in hell. (See 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; John 14:1-3; Matthew 13:43; Matthew 25:31-40; Matthew 13:41-42; Matthew 25:41-46.)

J. Church Autonomy. We believe in the autonomy of the local church. Open Door Baptist Church shall manage its own affairs and shall not be subject to any other religious body or organization. (See Ephesians 1:20-23; 1 Peter 5:1-3; Acts 14:23.)

K. Baptist Faith and Message. We subscribe to the year 2000 "Baptist Faith and Message" adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention as our larger statement of faith with scriptural references.

L. Godly Lifestyle. We believe that God designed a lifestyle for men and women as described in the scriptures; we reject any lifestyle that is an abomination before the Lord. (See Philippians 2:15; Leviticus 18; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 Timothy 1:8-11.)

M. Marriage. We further believe marriage is established and ordained by God, and is always and only between one man and one woman. God's biblical design is the only way the ceremony of marriage may be performed, or the institution of marriage be celebrated, recognized or observed at Open Door Baptist Church. (See Genesis 2:18-25; 1 Corinthians 7:1-2; Ephesians 5:22-23; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Peter 3:1-7.)

N. Human Life. We believe that human life begins at conception and is granted and created by God, and that our Christian duty is to preserve life and to speak out against those who would take it in violation of God's law, which violation includes elective abortion and euthanasia. (See Psalm 139:13-16; Jeremiah 1:5; Isaiah 49:1.)

Article V. Government.

A. The government of Open Door Baptist Church is vested in its members.

B. The membership retains unto itself the right of exclusive self-government in all phases of its life and organization.

C. The church membership recognizes the need for cooperation with other Baptist churches of like biblical doctrine. The church will cooperate with the Atlantic Baptist Association, the North Carolina State Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention as long as they remain faithful to God's word and authority.

Article VI. Non-profit Status and Liquidation.

Open Door Baptist Church is not organized for profit. In the event that the church is dissolved or liquidated, all its assets and property of every nature and description whatsoever shall be disposed of in accordance with the church's articles of incorporation as registered with the State of North Carolina on May 1, 2002, SOSID 629697.

Article VII. Amendment.

A. This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended provided any proposed amendment shall have been presented to the membership in writing at a church business meeting, and circulated among the membership for at least two weeks prior to any vote.

B. Approval of amendments to this Constitution and Bylaws shall require a three-fourths (3/4) majority of all votes cast, which shall include authorized absentee ballots.

Open Door Baptist Church
of

Morehead City, North Carolina
Inc.

March 31, 2015
As amended September 16, 2015

BYLAWS

These bylaws are herein established to define the manner in which the church constitution is to be implemented.

Section I. Church Membership.

A. Qualifications. To be accepted for membership in Open Door Baptist Church, persons shall:

1. Have made a profession of their personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior;
2. Have been scripturally baptized by immersion;
3. Be in agreement with the Articles of Faith, as found in Article IV of the Constitution of Open Door Baptist Church;
4. Practice a lifestyle that is in keeping with Article IV, Articles of Faith, of the constitution of Open Door Baptist Church, God's precepts, laws and commands according to the whole counsel of the Holy Scriptures.

B. Reception.

1. The process of attaining membership is begun with an interview by the pastor and/or the Elder/Deacon Board to evaluate the applicant's conversion experience and obedient standing before God. If any lack of conversion experience and/or unscriptural life practice is found to exist during this process, the application or request for membership may be halted until such areas of the applicant's life are corrected and/or regeneration has occurred.
2. This process is finalized with a simple majority vote by members present during any regular Sunday morning worship service.
3. Subsequent to the procedures in preceding paragraphs B.1 and B. 2, membership in the church may be obtained:

- a. By scriptural baptism by immersion after profession of faith in Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior.
- b. By transfer of church letter from another Southern Baptist church which adheres to the qualifications in Section I.A. above.
- c. By a statement of faith of their prior experience of conversion and scriptural baptism by immersion in another evangelical church of like faith and practice.

C. Termination. Membership in the church shall be terminated when:

- 1. The member requests a letter of transfer to join another church, or requests that his or her name be removed from the membership rolls.
- 2. The member joins a church of another denomination, in which case a letter of transfer is unnecessary.
- 3. The member is dismissed by a vote of the church due to reasons and circumstances provided by these bylaws in Section VI, "Church Discipline." The pastor and deacons will counsel any such disciplined member for restoration in accordance with Section VI, "Church Discipline," and in accordance with Matthew 18.
- 4. The member dies.

D. Orientation of New Members.

Candidates for membership and new members shall be counseled by the pastor/elders/deacons regarding the privileges and responsibilities of membership and adherence to Open Door Baptist Church's "Articles of Faith" in Article IV of the church constitution.

E. Privileges and Duties of Members.

- 1. Each active member in good standing who is at least 18 years of age shall have the right to a voice and a vote in all church transactions, and shall have rights and privileges to fully participate in the life and work of the church.
- 2. Any church member qualified to vote in accordance with the preceding Paragraph 1 may vote by absentee ballot. Such ballot must be dated and signed by the member and be presented in meeting by the member's assigned deacon, or mailed to the church office with attention to the member's assigned deacon.
- 3. It shall be the duty of all church members to uphold and abide by the church Constitution and Bylaws, the Articles of Faith, and the church Policy Manual.
- 4. Each member should provide financial support to the church.
- 5. Each member should maintain his or her membership in active status and in good standing by attending worship services regularly and frequently.

Section II. Officers.

All church officers must be members in good standing of the church.

A. The Pastor.

1. Qualifications. The qualifications for pastor shall be consistent with those listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. His training, skills, and experiences are needed in this area of leadership.

2. Responsibilities.

- a. The pastor's responsibilities generally fall into the following areas: preaching, teaching, pastoral counseling, administration, planning, and guiding the church to grow and fulfill its purposes.
- b. He shall lead the church, its organizations, and all church leaders in performing their tasks in worship, proclamation, education, evangelism and fellowship.
- c. The pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all church committees except the Pastor's Selection Committee.
- d. The pastor shall assist the elders and deacons in securing pulpit supply for those times when he is absent.
- e. The pastor is an elder of the church and a member of the Elder/Deacon Board.
- f. The pastor of Open Door Baptist Church shall not engage in any ceremony, ritual or other act—regardless of its location or milieu—that violates or is not in compliance with Article IV, "Articles of Faith," of the constitution of Open Door Baptist Church.

3. Call.

- a. A pastor shall be chosen and called to serve the church whenever a vacancy occurs.
- b. An ad hoc Pastor's Selection Committee shall be elected by the church to seek a suitable pastor, and this committee's recommendation will serve as a nomination.
- c. The Pastor's Selection Committee will recommend and present only one candidate at a time.
- d. The Pastor's Selection Committee shall consist of at least five (5) active members of the church.
- e. Each candidate shall preach at least one trial sermon before the church membership prior to his election.

f. At least one week's notice shall be provided by the Pastor's Selection Committee prior to the election of a candidate.

g. Church members shall be provided a formal question-and-answer session with any candidate prior to his election.

h. An affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of those members present, including signed and authorized absentee ballots, shall be necessary to constitute a call.

4. Term of Service.

The elected pastor shall serve until the employment is terminated either by his request or that of the church. In either case, no less than thirty (30) days' notice shall be given unless otherwise mutually agreed, or in case of egregious conduct on the part of the pastor.

5. Termination of the pastor's employment.

a. Causes and/or conditions: the pastor's employment may be terminated for any of the following causes:

(1) He resigns his position or leaves the church for any reason.

(2) He fails to uphold or violates Article III, the "Purpose" of the church, or Article IV, "Articles of Faith" of the church's constitution.

(3) His personal conduct proves him to be unqualified for the office of pastor under Section II. A.1. of these bylaws.

(4) He fails to fulfill his responsibilities under Section II. A. 2. of these bylaws.

b. Protocol for dismissal. The dismissal of the pastor shall conform to the following procedures:

(1) The Elder/Deacon Board shall notify the pastor of any and all allegations, and that an investigation will ensue.

(2) An investigation of all allegations shall be conducted jointly by the Elder/Deacon Board, taking into consideration the provisions and counsel of 1 Timothy 5:19. The joint board may call witnesses and examine documents and other evidence pertinent to the allegations, including testimony from the pastor.

(3) If the allegations are found to be false, further steps must then be taken to reconcile differences.

(4) If the allegations are found to be true and cannot be reconciled through the counsel of the board, the elders and deacons will ask the pastor to resign.

(5) If the allegations are found to be true by a majority vote of the board and the pastor refuses to resign, then the elders and deacons shall schedule a business meeting of the church members at which the board shall move for dismissal. The members shall then vote on the pastor's dismissal by secret ballot.

(6) At the scheduled meeting, a majority vote of those members present shall be required for dismissal.

(7) If the membership approves dismissal, the joint boards of elders and deacons shall issue a letter of dismissal to the pastor, citing the reasons for and the conditions of the termination of employment.

B. Church Staff.

1. The church shall employ or call staff as needed.
2. Staff members other than the pastor shall be recommended for employment by the Personnel Committee (See Section III.J. following).
3. A written job description will be prepared when the need for church staff is determined.
4. We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to church members and the community, any and all persons applying for employment as church staff must agree with the church's "Articles of Faith," Article IV of the church constitution.
5. After being hired, if any staff member exhibits behavior that disagrees with paragraph ii.B.4, above, that staff member shall be dismissed from the employment of the church.

C. Elders.

1. Number. The number of elders shall be determined by the needs of the church as mutually determined by the Elder/Deacon Board and the church membership.
2. Qualifications.
 - a. An elder must meet the qualifications as listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.

- b. Each candidate for the office of elder shall be examined by the Elder/Deacon Board and the Pastor prior to any election.
- c. Candidates for the office of Elder must be members in good standing for at least two years prior to election.
- d. Any elder who fails to uphold and conform to the standards of preceding paragraph a. may be removed from office by majority vote of the Elder/Deacon Board.

3. Election. When a new elder is required:

- a. The existing Elder/Deacon Board shall nominate to the membership a man or men who fit the qualifications for the office of elder.
- b. Any member of the church in good standing may recommend candidates to the Elder/Deacon Board for the office of elder. See paragraph I.E.4.
- c. Each candidate will then be voted on by the congregation in a called business meeting.
- d. A three-fourths (3/4) vote shall be required for approval as a new elder.

4. Ordination. The elder ordination service shall be scheduled and led by the pastor.

5. Duties and Responsibilities.

- a. Elders will provide spiritual oversight to the church and give direction in those matters.
- b. Elders will work in conjunction with the Elder/Deacon Board and the pastor in guiding and directing the church.
- c. The Elder/Deacon Board is the final authority in the interpretation of all matters spiritual, biblical, or legal, pertaining to this constitution, bylaws and policy manual.

6. Term of Office.

The term of office of an elder shall be perpetual, but must be reaffirmed by the church on a three-year basis by a simple majority vote of the church membership in order to remain in active service as an elder. See Section V.B., *Business Meetings*.

D. Deacons.

- 1. Number. The number of deacons shall be determined by the needs of the church as mutually determined by the Elder/Deacon Board and the church membership.

2. Qualifications.

- a. A deacon must meet the qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:1-7.
- b. Candidates for deacon shall be examined by the Elder/Deacon Board and the pastor prior to any election.
- c. Candidates for deacon must be members in good standing for at least one year prior to election.
- d. Prior to a scheduled election of deacons, each candidate for deacon shall be presented with the duties, qualifications and importance of the office of deacon.
- e. Any deacon who fails to uphold and conform to the standards of preceding paragraph a. may be removed from office by majority vote of the Elder/Deacon Board.

3. Election.

- a. The Elder/Deacon Board will nominate men of the church in good standing to the church for election.
- b. Any member of the church in good standing may recommend candidates for the office of deacon to the Elder/Deacon Board. See paragraph I.E.4.
- c. Each candidate will then be voted on by the congregation in a called business meeting.
- d. A three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote of those members present, including any authorized absentee ballots, shall be required for approval as a new deacon.

4. Ordination.

- a. The deacon ordination service shall be scheduled and led by the pastor.
- b. All deacons must be ordained either by Open Door Baptist Church or have been ordained by another Baptist church of like doctrine.

5. Duties and responsibilities.

- a. Deacons shall annually elect the chairman and other officers of their board.
- b. Deacons shall serve in a ministry of encouragement and counsel to the pastor concerning the growth, progress and welfare of the church; each deacon shall be a partner of the pastor and elders; he must support

and promote the Christian faith as well as the practices, programs, and ministries of the church.

c. Deacons shall assist the pastor in ministering to the members.

d. Deacons shall seek to resolve any problems of fellowship within the church.

e. Deacons shall assist the pastor in administering the ordinances of the church.

f. In the absence of the pastor, the chairman of the Elder/Deacon Board shall serve as an advisory member to all organizations, departments and committees of the church.

g. If possible, appropriate and practicable, ensure that assigned members are informed of business meetings, and are provided with absentee ballots when requested.

6. Term of office and intra-term vacancies.

a. A deacon's term of office shall be three years. Upon the expiration of his term, a deacon may be reaffirmed by a majority vote of the church provided he still meets the requirements for qualification as in Paragraph II.D.2.

b. When a deacon vacates his position for any reason other than the expiration of his term, the chairman of the Elder/Deacon Board shall announce to the board that an election of a replacement deacon shall be held during a called church business meeting. The Elder/Deacon Board will then nominate a candidate who, upon election to office, shall be ordained and serve the remainder of the unexpired term; the qualifications of paragraph a, above, and also paragraph II.D.2., preceding, apply to all intra-term vacancies.

E. Moderator.

1. A moderator shall preside over all regular and called business meetings of the church in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order*.

2. The church moderator shall be an elder of the church other than the pastor, or a member appointed by the Elder/Deacon Board to preside over a specific meeting when no elder is able to attend.

F. Church Clerk.

1. The church clerk shall be elected every three years.

2. The church clerk shall keep accurate minutes of all business meetings.

3. An assistant church clerk may be elected.
4. The clerk and the assistant clerk may be assisted by an employed secretary.

G. Treasurer.

1. The church Treasurer shall be elected every three years as the custodian of all monies of the church, and—to satisfy debts of the church—shall direct the disbursement of these monies by checks as authorized by the church Finance Committee.
2. The church Treasurer shall ensure that at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements is maintained and shall render monthly and annual reports of this account to the church Finance Committee.
3. The finances of the church shall be audited at least every two years by an internal auditing committee or an agency hired and approved by the Elder/Deacon Board.

H. Directors.

1. The Directors of the church shall be the duly elected President, Vice President and Treasurer, and shall hold in trust the property of the church.
2. Directors shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property of the church without a specific vote of the church membership authorizing each transaction.
3. Directors shall sign any and all legal documents involving the purchase, sale, mortgage, lease or transfer of church property or any other legal documents requiring the signature of the directors on behalf of the church.

J. Vacancies.

1. When any elected office or position of the church is vacated, except that of the pastor and staff members, the vacancy shall be filled by church election at a called business meeting as soon as possible after such vacancy has occurred.
2. Candidates for vacated elective offices shall be secured by the Nominating Committee.

Section III. Church Committees.

- A. Number of Committees. Church committees shall be formed from within the church membership as needed for successfully accomplishing the mission and purpose of the church.

B. Election. Church committee or board members shall be active members of the church in good standing, and shall be elected by the church membership from nominations presented by the Nominating Committee.

C. Nominations. Church members may recommend persons for nomination to committees by contacting the Nominating Committee. Such recommendations from members of the church may be forwarded to the Nominating Committee through the church secretary.

D. Number of Members. Each committee shall have a minimum of three members, including a chairperson; all activities of the church having fewer than three members shall be called "ministries."

E. Vacancies. Any committee member elected to fill the vacancy of an unexpired term shall serve the remainder of the term for the position vacated.

F. Funding. When funding is required, each committee chairperson shall submit an annual budget request to the Finance Committee.

G. Standing committees. Standing committees are Finance and Nominating, and the standing board is the Elder/Deacon Board.

H. Term of Office. Each member of a church committee shall serve for a term of three years, except as described in paragraph E above, and is eligible for reelection if nominated at the end of that term.

J. Personnel Committee. A Personnel Committee shall consist of the Chairman of Deacons, one Elder and the Treasurer for the purpose of supervising the hiring and/or termination of staff employees.

Section IV. Church Policy Manual.

A. Implementation. The board of deacons is responsible for establishing and implementing a manual that further defines church policy in accordance with this Constitution and Bylaws.

B. Notification. The church membership must be notified of any proposed amendment to the Church Policy Manual at least two weeks prior to any vote.

C. Amendment. A majority vote of the quorum present during a business meeting of the active church membership called for the purpose of amendment shall be required to approve any amendment of the Church Policy Manual.

Section V. Church Meetings. (As amended September 16, 2015)

A. General.

1. All gatherings of the members of Open Door Baptist Church, such as worship services, Bible studies, committee meetings, business meetings, social events, weddings, funerals, memorial services, and sports activities are acts of worship, and shall be conducted in accordance with the Articles of Faith, Section IV of the church constitution.
2. All Open Door Baptist Church grounds, buildings, and other facilities are devoted and dedicated to, and reserved for the purpose of worshipping the Lord God, and shall be utilized in accordance with the Articles of Faith, Section IV of the church constitution.

B. Worship services.

1. The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning for the worship of God, for preaching, instruction, evangelism, and on each Wednesday evening for designated prayer and Bible study.
2. These meetings shall be open to all church members and to all persons who wish to attend organized worship, unless such persons are prohibited by court order. See 2 John 1:7-11.
3. These meetings shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor or a designated church officer or pulpit supply minister.

C. Business Meetings.

1. Frequency. Business meetings of Open Door Baptist Church shall be called, rather than scheduled on a periodic basis. When no business needs to be presented to the church, no meeting shall be called.
2. Quorum. All business meetings shall require a quorum of at least thirty per cent (30%) of the **active** membership to be present in order to conduct business. See Section I.E.4. of these bylaws.
3. Voting Eligibility. Only active members in good standing are eligible to vote in elections of staff, officers and committee members, or in votes of referendum, such as policy issues and amendments to this constitution, bylaws or the Church Policy Manual. See Sections I.E.1., and I.E.4. of these bylaws.
4. Meeting Protocol. All business meetings shall be held and conducted in accordance with the Church Policy Manual and Robert's Rules of Order.

D. Committee Meetings and Others. Those meetings of members of the church for purposes not included in paragraphs V.A. and V.B above may be conducted under the direction of their chair persons, and as scheduled or called.

Section VI. Church discipline.

- A. Should any difference arise between or among members, the aggrieved member(s) shall decide if the issue is one in which he (they) should bear with his (their) brother(s) or sister(s) in accordance with Romans 15:1, Ephesians 4:1-3, and Colossians 3:12-14.
- B. Church discipline must follow the principles outlined in Matthew 18:15-20.

Ratification.

This Constitution and these Bylaws are hereby ratified by action of the church membership in its business meeting on _____ (date)

Moderator: _____

Church Clerk: _____

Deacon Chair: _____