

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Qualifications: Membership in this church is open to all who are born again believers in the Lordship of Jesus Christ determined by a saving relationship with Christ as Head of the church, which we understand in this fashion:

1. God's sovereign grace and love for all despite sin.
2. Human repentance and faith, committing fully to Christ and working with others for reconciliation. (See Article III, The Articles of Faith which consists of the Baptist Faith and Message. Section IV. Salvation)

Section 2. Membership: Persons may present themselves to the church for membership at any worship service or in any other special services where an invitation is extended.

A. Persons may unite with this church in the following ways:

1. Those making an initial **profession of faith** in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and understanding that faith in accordance with the Bible as generally interpreted by Baptists, shall be baptized by immersion, **Believer's Baptism**, as the basis of acceptance into this body. **However, in cases where physical limitations prevent baptism by immersion, a specialized baptism may be permitted at the discretion of the pastor and deacon body.** (See Article III, The Articles of Faith which consists of the Baptist Faith and Message, Section VII, Baptism and The Lord's Supper).
2. Those who are currently members in good standing of another church of like faith and order may come by **promise of a letter** of recommendation from that church.
3. Those who are members of a Baptist church where no record of their membership exist or those who are not currently members of another Baptist church but who are baptized believers in Christ, upon examination and recommendation of the pastor and/or membership committee may come before the church for membership on the basis of their **statement** of previous

experience. This statement of faith shall include a statement of prior conversion and Believer's Baptism by immersion in another church in accordance with the teachings of the New Testament. In such cases the candidates will be required to give affirmation to the following questions:

1. Have you committed yourself to Jesus Christ as Lord of your life and do you trust Him and Him alone as the only way of salvation and have you publicly confessed your faith in Him before another body of believers who also understand salvation in this manner?
2. Do you believe your salvation is eternal and that you do not lose your salvation or "fall from grace" once you have been "born again"?
3. Have you experienced Believer's Baptism by immersion following your confession of faith?
4. Do you believe your baptism was an act of obedience through which you confessed your faith and that your baptism is symbolic and in itself had no power to wash away your sins?

4) Those who have come to Christ and expressed their discipleship through baptism of a different mode or meaning shall be requested to be baptized as a continuing reaffirmation of their faith, as a witness to the Baptist understanding of believer's Baptism, and as an act of unity with congregations of our faith and order.

- B. Persons requesting membership in this fellowship of believers shall be requested to review the church covenant and constitution and by-laws before being presented to the church for membership.
- C. The New Members Class is strongly encouraged.
- D. Persons will be received into this fellowship by an affirmation of the church.

Section 3. Duties: Members are expected, first of all, to be faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian Life; and also to extend habitually the services of this church, to regularly contribute for her support and for her causes and to share in her organized work. Further, see Church Covenant.

Section 4. Rights: Such members as are in full and regular standing and do not hold

letters of dismissal, and such only may act and vote in the transactions of this church.

Section 5. Quorum: Five (5) percent of the active roll of the membership shall constitute a quorum, except that for the election of officers and deacons, ten (10) percent, and for the call of a pastor fifty (50) percent shall be necessary. Church attendance determines the active roll. Members who do not attend for six months will be moved to inactive status. Exceptions include those who are homebound or experiencing sickness.

Section 6. Termination: The continuance of membership shall be subject to the principles and usage of the Baptist Churches, and especially as follows:

1. Any member in good and regular standing who desires a letter of dismissal and recommendation to any other Baptist Church of like faith and order is entitled to receive it upon his (her) request. In case of removal to another community, he (her) should promptly make such request. This letter shall be valid as a recommendation for six (6) months from its date, unless renewed, and this restriction shall be stated in the letter.
2. If a member in good standing request to be released from his covenant obligations to this church for reasons which the church may finally deem satisfactory, after he (she) shall have patiently and kindly endeavored to secure his (her) continuance in her fellowship, such request may be granted, and his (her) membership terminated.
3. Should a member become an offense to the church and to its good name by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct, or by persistent breach of his (her) church covenant vows, or non-support of the church, the church may, after due notice and hearing, and after faithful efforts have been made to bring such member to repentance and amendment, either terminate his membership, or place on an inactive list.
4. The membership of no person shall be terminated (except by request for letter) or action looking thereto until it shall first be considered by the deacons, who shall make recommendations to the church.

Section 7. Restoration: Any person, whose membership has been terminated for

any offense, may be restored by vote of the church thru process of council with leadership, and upon evidence of his (her) repentance and reformation; or, if on account of continued absence, upon satisfactory explanation of thereof.

ARTICLE II – CHURCH OFFICERS

The Officers of this church shall be as follows:

A. PASTOR

A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. His election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's public notice shall be given. A pulpit committee, of not less than five or more than seven known spiritual leaders, made up of both men and women, shall be elected by the church to seek out a suitable pastor, and their recommendation will constitute a nomination, though any member has the privilege of making other nominations. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one man at a time. Election shall be by ballot, and an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present and voting, being necessary for a choice. The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by mutual consent. The pastor shall have in charge the welfare and oversight of the church. He shall study the word of God. He shall facilitate visits to the sick and homebound. He shall lead by example, by preaching and teaching God's word. He shall preside at all meetings of the church, except as hereinafter provided. The Pastor shall also serve as Ex-Officio member on all standing and special committees of Walnut Grove Baptist Church. His complete job description and description of salary and benefits are on file in the church office.

B. Youth/Children/Discipleship/Music Minister

Their job descriptions and salaries are on file in the church office.

C. DEACONS

The church shall elect as many deacons as it feels necessary to do the Lord's work. It shall be pertinent for the church to promote to honorary life membership any deacon who by reason of age or infirmities shall, after honorable service, be no longer able to actively serve. Deacons shall always be considered deacons even if retired from "active" status. See Deacons Policy and Procedure Manual. The whole body of deacons shall meet the first Sunday night in each month.

D. MODERATOR

The Moderator shall be proposed by the nominating committee and be voted on by the church body annually. In the absence of the moderator the assistant moderator or moderators shall preside. These assistant moderators shall be appointed by the moderator and elected by the congregation at a business meeting.

E. CLERK/ASSISTANT CLERK

The Clerk and Assistant Clerk shall be proposed by the nominating committee and be voted on by the church body.

1. The Clerk shall keep a written record of minutes of all regular or special called church business meetings with digital copies being kept indefinitely.
2. The Clerk shall keep in The Church Membership Book a chronological and alphabetical register of names of members, with dates of admission, dismissal, or death, together with a record of baptisms.
3. The Clerk shall request letters from other churches for those who join our church by letter.
4. The Clerk shall send a letter of dismissal to the church that has requested it, after this church body has voted to grant the letter.
5. The Clerk shall remove from The Church Membership Book, the names of those who request this action by returning a signed name removal request form.

F. TREASURER

The treasurer shall be proposed by the nominating committee and voted on by the church body annually.

See Policy and Procedures manual for list of duties.

H. TRUSTEES

The Trustees shall consist of no less than four (4) members and no more than seven (7), each serving a three (3) year term being eligible to be re-elected with numbers at discretion of the committee chair and pastor. The chairman shall be elected by the church and shall serve a two-year term and may be reappointed for consecutive terms, contingent upon continued interest after consultation with the nominating committee. See Policy and Procedures manual for list of duties.

G. ELECTION OF CHURCH OFFICERS

Section 1. Church Staff:

Minister of Music, Minister of Education, Associate Pastor of other similar staff positions which are vacated or created shall be nominated by a Search Team and elected by secret ballot with an affirmative choice of three-fourths (3/4) of those present and voting. The Search Team shall consist of not less than five (5) or more than seven (7) (at least 3 men and 2 women) known as spiritual leaders and elected by the church. The church shall call or employ only such staff members as the church shall need. When staff members are needed, the personnel committee shall prepare a job description for each position. Upon recommendations by the personnel committee, such staff positions will be created after being approved by the church. The staff shall operate under the supervision and auspices of the pastor, During any such time as the church is without a pastor, the personnel committee shall designate a staff member to assume the personnel responsibilities ordinarily assumed by the pastor. Church staff shall be church members.

Section 2. Employees:

Custodian, Secretary(ies), or similarly employed persons shall be recommended to the church by the Personnel Team, and approved for employment by the church. (See ARTICLE III – TEAMS (F) PERSONNEL TEAM).

ARTICLE III – COMMITTEES

The following standing committees shall be elected annually and eligible to succeed for two (2) years unless otherwise stated. Committees shall serve concurrent with the church year of October to September. Committees of this church shall be either a standing or an ad-hoc Committee. Ad-hoc committees are temporary committees for a specific purpose and shall exist only for that purpose. Standing committees shall be a permanent committee and members shall be elected as stated in the section of by-laws pertaining to that committee.

A. BUILDING AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE

This committee is recommended to consist of at least five (5) and no more than seven (7) persons with numbers at discretion of the committee chair and pastor. The chairman shall serve a two-year term and may be reappointed for consecutive terms, contingent upon continued interest after consultation with the nominating committee. For a list of duties see policy and procedures manual.

B. THE MISSION COMMITTEE

The Committee seeks to discover possibilities for local, state, and international mission projects, shares findings with church program organizations, and serves the church in establishing and conducting such mission projects as may be assigned to it. For a list of duties see policy and procedures manual.

C. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee is recommended to consist of four (4) members nominated by the active Deacons and elected by the church plus the pastor as an ex-officio member with numbers at discretion of the committee chair and pastor. The four members selected by the church shall serve for two (2) years on a rotating basis. At the August Business Meeting the Nominating Committee shall place into nomination two members to replace the two members rotating off the committee. For a list of duties, see the policy and Procedure manual.

D. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The Personnel Committee is recommended to consist of at least five (5) and no more than nine (9) members with numbers at discretion of the committee chair and pastor. **The chairman shall be elected by the church and shall serve a two-year term and may be reappointed for consecutive terms, contingent upon continued interest after consultation with the nominating committee. These** members shall be appointed at the discretion of the chair and pastor. For a description of appointments, see the Policy and procedures manual.

Section 1. Church Secretary, Custodian and similar persons:

In consultation with the Pastor, this committee shall have the responsibility of recruiting, interviewing and recommending the Church Secretary and Custodian, when these vacancies occur or when the need for other such employees arise. In order to be consistent in employment practices the Committee shall (a) formulate and maintain a written job description identifying the major duties and responsibilities assigned to each employee; (b) use a written application form and means whereby references can be checked out; (c) make salary recommendations in accordance with the job description and qualifications of the individual being considered.

A program of employee benefits shall be recommended by this Committee. This is to include such things as vacation, holidays, other time off, retirement, insurance, etc. This Committee shall make annual budget recommendations to the Finance Committee in reference to these employees.

Recommendation of individuals being hired, job description and salary shall be presented to the church for their approval at a regular business meeting or a special meeting called for such a purpose.

Following employment, this committee shall assist in placing the new employees on the job, periodic monitoring of their work and guidance where deemed appropriate.

The Personnel Committee shall be responsible in securing persons to fill the absences of custodian, secretary or similarly employed persons due to vacations, sick days, etc.

E. GREETING AND USHERS

The Greeting and Ushers Committee is recommended to consist of no more than ten (10) members elected by the church to serve one (1) year term with numbers at discretion of the committee chair and pastor. The chairman shall be elected by the church and shall serve a two-year term and may be reappointed for consecutive terms, contingent upon continued interest after consultation with the nominating committee. For a description of duties, see the policy and procedures manual.

F. BENEVOLENCE - H2O Committee

The Benevolence – H2O Committee is recommended to consist of at least three (3) members with numbers at discretion of the committee chair and pastor. The chairman shall be elected by the church and shall serve a two-year term and may be reappointed for consecutive terms, contingent upon continued interest after consultation with the nominating committee. For a description of duties, see the policy and procedures manual.

G. DECORATION COMMITTEE

The Decoration Committee is recommended to consist of at least six (6) members elected by the church annually with numbers at discretion of the committee chair and pastor. The chairman shall be elected by the church and shall serve a two-year term and may be reappointed for consecutive terms, contingent upon continued interest after consultation with the nominating committee. For a list of duties see policy and procedures manual.

H. CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE

The Constitution and Bylaws Committee is recommended to consist of seven (7) members elected by the church annually with numbers at discretion of the committee chair and pastor. The purpose of this Committee is to keep constant surveillance on the fundamental truths and principles in the constitution, covenant, articles of faith and bylaws held by the members of this church. The Committee shall recommend the addition and updating of such guidelines which will allow the church to accurately relate to her members and to others. The chairman shall be elected by the church and shall serve a two-year term and may be reappointed for consecutive terms, contingent upon continued interest after consultation with the nominating committee. For a list of duties see policy and procedures manual.

I. TECH COMMITTEE/MUSIC

The Tech Committee is recommended to consist of three (3) members elected by the church annually with numbers at discretion of the committee chair and pastor. The chairman shall be elected by the church and shall serve a two-year term and may be reappointed for consecutive terms, contingent upon continued interest after consultation with the nominating committee.

1. Enlist and train individuals to operate the sound system.
2. Record Sunday morning and evening services, business meetings and special occasions that arise.
3. Engage a trained person to operate the sound system when needed.
4. Oversee needed repairs.

5. Make recommendation to the church when needed.

For a list of other duties see policy and procedures manual.

J. EXECUTIVE BOARD REPRESENTATIVES

The Executive Board representatives is recommended to consist of two (2) members elected by the church and one (1) alternate elected by the church to serve annually with numbers at discretion of the committee chair and pastor.

Duties:

1. Church representatives to the Board Meetings which are held bimonthly.
2. Report to the church on Executive Board meetings and matters of the Association.

K. SAFETY

The Safety team is recommended to consist of the number of members needed as determined by the chair in consultation with the pastor. The chairman shall be elected by the church and shall serve a two-year term and may be reappointed for consecutive terms, contingent upon continued interest after consultation with the nominating committee. For a description of duties, see the policy and procedures manual.

L. CEMETERY

The Cemetery committee is recommended to consist of no less than three (3) and no more than (5) members elected by the church with numbers at discretion of the committee chair and pastor. The chairman shall be elected by the church and shall serve a two-year term and may be reappointed for consecutive terms, contingent upon continued interest after consultation with the nominating committee. For a description of duties, see the policy and procedures manual.

M. – KITCHEN COMMITTEE

The Kitchen Committee is recommended to consist of at least six (6) members with numbers at discretion of the committee chair and pastor. The chairman shall be elected by the church and shall serve a two-year term and may be reappointed for consecutive terms, contingent upon continued interest after consultation with the nominating committee. For a description of duties, see the policy and procedures manual.

N. YOUTH COMMITTEE

The Youth Committee shall be lead by the Youth Minister and is recommended to consist of at least three (3) members with numbers at the discretion of the committee chair and pastor. For a description of duties, see the policy and procedures manual.

O. CHILDREN COMMITTEE

The Children Committee shall be lead by the Children Minister and is recommended to consist of at least three (3) members with numbers at the discretion of the committee chair and pastor. For a description of duties, see the policy and procedures manual.

ARTICLE IV – CHURCH FINANCE

The finance committee is recommended to consist of no less than four (4) members elected by the church to serve a three (3) year term with numbers at discretion of the committee chair and pastor. The chairman shall be the church Treasurer. For a description of duties, see the policy and procedures manual.

ARTICLE V – ASSEMBLING

Section 1. Worship

1. Public services shall be held steadily on the Lord's Day each week.
2. The Lord's Supper shall be commemorated quarterly.
3. Special religious meetings may be designated by the pastor at his discretion,

or by vote of the church.

Section 2. Business

1. At any of the regular meetings for worship the church may without special notice, act upon the reception of members or upon the dismissal of members to other churches, and upon the appointment of delegates to councils, but not upon other business.
2. Special business meetings may be called by the active deacons, trustees, standing committees, or ad-hoc committees, by having the purpose of the meeting clearly stated in a notice presented from the pulpit a minimum of fourteen (14) days prior to the requested special business meeting,
3. This body recognized Robert's Rules of Order revised, as our parliamentary authority.

ARTICLE VI – DISCIPLINE

Section 1. Should any unhappy differences arise between members, the aggrieved member shall follow, in a tender Spirit, the rules given by our Lord in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew.

Section 2. Should any case of gross breach of covenant, or of public scandal occur, the pastor and deacons shall endeavor to remove the offense; and if such efforts fail, shall report the case to the church.

Section 3. If the church votes to entertain a complaint, which must be made in writing, it shall appoint a reasonable time and place of hearing and notify the person in question thereof, furnishing him with a copy of the charges.

Section 4. At such hearing, the accused member may call to his aid any member of the church as counsel. If he (she) shall not present himself at the time appointed, or give satisfactory reason for his neglect to do so, the church may proceed in his absence.

Section 5. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance, but should an adverse decision be reached, the church may proceed to admonish or declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the church.

Section 6. In case of grave difficulty, the church will be ready, if requested, to ask the advice of an acceptable council from neighboring churches.

ARTICLE VII – THE CHURCH COUNCIL

The church council shall seek to correlate and coordinate the activities and organizations of the church, yet with advisory powers only. **It shall consist of the pastor and committee's chairpersons.** For a description of duties, see the policy and procedures manual.

ARTICLE VIII – AMENDMENTS

The By-Laws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the votes cast at any business meeting provided that a minimum of fourteen (14) days notification of article and intent of amendment is stated to the church.