

# **Upper Cross Roads Baptist Church**

## **Constitution & By-Laws**

1993 Revision; 05/26/2002 Addendum; 01/12/2020 Covenant

### **PREAMBLE**

For the purpose of preserving and making secure the principles of our faith, and to the end that this body be governed in an orderly manner, and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of the church, and to set forth the relationship of this body to other bodies of the same faith, we do declare and establish this constitution. The Scriptures are our supreme authority in faith and practice and nothing in this constitution shall be deemed to take precedence over Scriptural principles.

### **ARTICLE I: Name**

The name of this body is the Upper Cross Roads Baptist Church. It is incorporated under the laws of the State of Maryland as a non-profit religious corporation; its government is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is located at 2717 Greene Rd., Baldwin, MD 21013.

### **ARTICLE II: Purpose**

The overriding philosophy of Upper Cross Roads Baptist Church is to glorify God in all that we do. The purpose of this body is to evangelize the lost and edify the saints. This purpose is fulfilled through: providing regular opportunities for public worship; administering the ordinances; sustaining the doctrines and ethics set forth in the New Testament for the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ; nurturing its members through a family-oriented program including Christian education and fellowship; influencing the community, state, and nation for righteousness; disbursing its offerings to the furtherance of the Gospel; and through preaching and propagating the Gospel of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord in this area and throughout the world.

### **ARTICLE III: Articles of Faith**

In order to establish a firm doctrinal foundation, we have set forth these Articles of Faith (Ephesians 4:14). The Articles of Faith shall always be based upon the infallible Word of God.

Upper Cross Roads Baptist Church is an independent, fundamental, Bible-believing Baptist church, holding to the inerrancy of the Scriptures, and proclaiming the gospel message of salvation free to all who have faith in the blood of Christ alone, apart from

works. We are pre-millennial and dispensational in our interpretation of the Scriptures, as set forth in these Articles of Faith.

## **A. THE HOLY SCRIPTURES**

We believe in the verbal, plenary inspiration of Scripture, that the Bible is the Word of God, inerrant in the original manuscripts, and that it is the supreme and final authority in faith and practice. The Bible is complete in sixty-six books, nothing can be added to or taken away. Although the Bible is not primarily a science book, where reference is made to science, it is accurate; and although it is not primarily a history book, it is historically accurate.

2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Revelation 22:18-19.

## **B. THE TRINITY**

We believe that God eternally exists in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and that these three are one God, having precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfections; and executing distinct but harmonious offices.

Exodus 15:11; Matthew 28:19-20; John 1:1-4; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 2:18; 1 John 4:13-14.

### **1. God the Father**

We believe that God the Father is the first person of the Trinity, the Supreme Being, that He is a spirit, perfect in all attributes, including: Sovereignty, Holiness, Love, Mercy, Omnipotence, Omnipresence, Omniscience, Eternality, Immutability, and Truth. He is the Author of our Salvation, having resurrected His Son, Jesus Christ, from the dead.

Exodus 34:6-7; Isaiah 45:5-6; Malachi 3:6; John 4:24; Romans 11:33-34; James 1:17.

### **2. God the Son**

We believe that Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, being conceived by the virgin Mary through a miraculous work of the Holy Spirit; and that He was wholly God and wholly man. He lived a sinless life, performed miracles, was crucified, died, was buried, and arose bodily from the dead the third day. He ascended to heaven, was exalted, and took His place at the right hand of God the Father, where He ever lives to make intercession in behalf of all who come to God through Him.

Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:20, 23; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-3, 14, 10:30; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:15-20; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 7:25.

### **3. God the Holy Spirit**

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Holy Trinity. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures, and, through illumination, He enables believers to understand the truth. The work of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. His ministries in the present age are: restraining evil in the world; convicting the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment; regeneration of believers; indwelling all who are saved, thereby sealing them unto the day of redemption; and filling those for power and service who are yielded to Him. We believe that some gifts of the Holy Spirit, including speaking in tongues, prophecy, and the gift of miraculous healings, were temporary, and ceased when the canon of Scripture was complete. However, during this present age, the Lord does heal the body in answer to believing prayer, but only according to His sovereign will and for His glory.

John 14:16-17, 26, 16:7-11; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 6:19, 13:8-10; Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 1:13, 4:30, 5:18; James 5:14-16; 2 Peter 1:21.

#### **C. CREATION**

We believe in the Genesis account of creation, that the universe was created in six literal days, that it is to be accepted literally, not allegorically nor figuratively. Man and each kind of plant and animal were created directly by God, not through an evolutionary process over interminable periods of time, or from lower to higher forms.

Genesis 1:1-31, 2:1-22; Exodus 20:11; Jeremiah 10:12; Nehemiah 9:6 John 1:3; Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 11:3; Revelation 10:6.

#### **D. SIN**

We believe that sin is disobedience to God, whether willful or unknown. Sin entered the human race by Adam's voluntary transgression of God's command and submission to Satan. The wages of sin is death. Therefore, by Adam sin entered the human race, and death by sin, so that death passed upon all men, for all have sinned.

Sin separates man from God and resulted in the curse of the entire creation. If persisted in, sin will result in the complete and final ruin of the person who does not forsake it and experience the new birth.

Because of God's Holy nature, He cannot compromise on sin; however, because of the blood of Christ, He can and will love, forgive, and restore sinners who repent and confess their sins, and that includes all sins.

Genesis 2:17, 3:1-6, 3:14-19; Ezekiel 18:4; Psalm 51:1-19; 66:18; Proverbs 6:16-19; Romans 3:10, 23; 5:12-17; 6:23; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Galatians 5:19-21; Colossians 3:5-10; James 1:14-15, 4:17; 1 John 1:9.

## **E. MAN**

We believe that man was originally created in the image of God, having body, soul, and spirit; that conscience and will make him morally responsible to God. Man sinned, thereby incurring not only physical death, but also spiritual death, which is separation from God. We believe that all men are born with a sinful nature as evidenced by sinful acts, being totally depraved (the only exception being the man, Christ Jesus), and that, if not born again, they are under just condemnation to eternal punishment, without defense or excuse.

Genesis 2:7, 6:5; Isaiah 64:6; John 5:40; Romans 1:20, 3:10-18, 23, 5:12; Hebrews 9:27.

## **F. SALVATION**

We believe that it is impossible for man to save himself, it is the work of God. Salvation is freely available, by the grace of God, to all who, having been brought under conviction of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God, will repent and believe. It is obtained through faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ - His substitutionary death for our sins, His burial, and His resurrection on the third day. Men are justified on the grounds of the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ alone, which washes away our sin. All who believe are born again, from above, by the Holy Spirit, and thereby become the children of God and joint-heirs with Christ.

Leviticus 17:11; John 5:24; Romans 5:6-9, 10:9-10, 17; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Ephesians 1:7, 13, 2:8-9; Titus 3:5-7; Hebrews 9:11-12, 21-22; 1 Peter 3:18; Revelation 1:5.

## **G. ETERNAL SECURITY**

We believe that it is the privilege of all who are born again to be assured of their salvation. All those who are regenerated from above are sealed by the Holy Spirit and are thereby eternally secure.

John 10:27-29; Romans 8:33-39; Ephesians 1:13; Philippians 1:6; 2 Timothy 1:12; 1 John 5:10-13.

## **H. SANCTIFICATION**

We believe that sanctification of believers, which is a setting apart unto God, occurs in three phases:

### **1. Positional Sanctification**

Positional sanctification is already complete because we are in Christ.

### **2. Progressive Sanctification**

Progressive sanctification is the process whereby the Christian is to grow in grace and to be changed by the power of the Holy Spirit. Although saved, we retain our sin nature (the flesh) which cannot be eradicated in this life. Therefore, while the standing of the Christian is perfect in Christ, his present state is one of striving daily to be more Christ-like.

### **3. Perfect Sanctification**

Perfect sanctification will occur when we shall see the Lord Jesus Christ and shall be like Him.

John 17:17; Romans 8:13, 29-30, 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 3:18, 7:1; Ephesians 1:4; Galatians 5:16-17; Ephesians 4:24, 5:25-27; Philippians 3:10; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 10:10, 14, 12:10; 1 John 3:2-3.

## **I. SEPARATION**

We believe that all who are saved should live in such a manner as not to bring a reproach upon their Savior and Lord. Separation from all religious apostasy, all sinful worldly pleasures, practices, and associations is commanded of God.

Romans 12:1-2, 13:14, 14:13; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 1:9-11.

## **J. SATAN**

We believe that Satan is a created angelic being who fell from his first estate through pride. He is the god of this world, ruling by the permissive will of God. He exercises authority over the unsaved, tempts the believer to sin, continually accuses the brethren before the throne of God, and counterfeits the works of God by fostering religious movements and systems of false doctrine. These systems are typically characterized by a denial of the efficacy of the blood of Christ, His absolute Deity, the absolute authority of the Scriptures, and salvation by grace alone. Satan has been defeated by the finished work of Christ. During the millennium he will be confined to the abyss to be released at the end of the period to lead the armies of evil against God. He will finally be judged and doomed to the lake of fire forever.

Isaiah 14:12-17; Job 1:6-12; John 8:44; 2 Corinthians 4:4, 11:13-15; Ephesians 2:2, 6:12; 1 Timothy 4:1; Jude 1:6; Revelation 12:10, 20:1-3, 7-10.

## **K. THE CHURCH**

We believe that the universal church is the body and bride of Christ. This spiritual organism was established by our Lord Jesus and is made up of all born again believers of this present age, irrespective of their affiliation.

We believe that the local church is a congregation of baptized believers who have placed themselves under the authority of the body, and have covenanted together for worship, observance of ordinances, and the work of the ministry. This work includes equipping and edifying the believers, evangelizing the lost, and discipling those who believe, both locally and in the uttermost parts of the earth.

Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8, 2:41-42; Romans 12:4-5; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Ephesians 1:22-23, 4:12, 5:25-27.

## **L. CHURCH ORDINANCES**

We believe that the ordinances of the local church are two: baptism and the Lord's supper. Both ordinances are commanded by Christ and should be observed only by believers, and administered only by the authority of the local church.

Baptism is the total immersion in water of a believer in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit to show, in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior. It is symbolic of our death to sin and our resurrection to a new life in Him. We believe that Scriptural baptism is a prerequisite to church membership.

The Lord's Supper, communion, is the highest act of worship. It is a memorial of Christ's death for us and a symbol of His sustaining our spiritual life and growth. It is to be practiced, only after solemn self examination, until Christ returns.

Matthew 3:3-17, 28:19; John 3:22-23, 4:1-2; Acts 2:38, 8:12, 36-39, 16:32-34, 18:8; Romans 6:3-7; 1 Corinthians 11:23-30.

## **M. THE CHRISTIAN WALK AND SERVICE**

We believe that, as believers, we are called with a holy calling to walk, "not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," and thus not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. We believe that it is the obligation of all believers to witness by their life and by their words to the truths of the Holy Scriptures, to seek to proclaim the gospel to the lost, to pray for the work of the Lord, and to support it with their means, as the Lord has prospered them.

Acts 1:8; Romans 6:11-13; 1 Corinthians 16:2; Galatians 5:16-18; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 2:6-7; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 1:4-7.

## **N. MARRIAGE**

We believe in the sanctity of marriage as a lifelong covenant relationship between one man and one woman, designed by God to be permanent until death. The Scriptures clearly teach that believers are not to marry unbelievers, thereby creating an unequal yoke. The clear teaching of Jesus, "What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder" (Matthew 19:6b), is not contradicted elsewhere in the Bible.

Genesis 2:23-24; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32, 19:3-9; Mark 10:4-9; Romans 7:1-3; I Corinthians 7:34; 2 Corinthians 6:14-16.

## **O. THE LORD'S DAY**

We believe that God has ordained that one day in seven should be observed as a day of rest. Under Old Testament law, the seventh day (Saturday) was strictly observed as the Sabbath unto the Lord. Under grace, we observe the first day of the week (Sunday) as the Lord's day because on it He arose from the dead and because the early church met on the first day of the week. The day should be kept sacred to rest, worship, and service to the Lord.

Genesis 2:2-3; Isaiah 58:13-14; Matthew 28:1-6; Mark 16:9; John 20:19-22; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2; Hebrews 10:25; Revelation 1:10.

## **P. CIVIL GOVERNMENT**

We believe that God has ordained and instituted civil government for the welfare of society, to promote good and restrain and punish evil. It is the duty of Christians to pray for those who are in authority, to render due loyalty, respect, and obedience to them, and to pay taxes and customs demanded of them. Where the demands of civil law on Christians conflict directly with the supreme and higher law of God to them, Christians must obey God rather than men; however, a Christ-like attitude must prevail.

Daniel 4:17; Matthew 22:21; Acts 4:19, 5:29; Romans 13:1-3; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-14

## **Q. ELECTION AND PREDESTINATION**

We believe that salvation is made free to all by the gospel, and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel. Election is a sovereign act of love and mercy by God Almighty, according to His foreknowledge. Those elected are predestined unto adoption as children of God, in Christ and to conformity to His image.

John 3:14-18, 6:37-40; Romans 8:29-30, 9:15; Ephesians 1:4-6, 11; 1 Thessalonians 1:3-6; 2 Timothy 1:9; 1 Peter 1:2; Revelation 22:17

## **R. SECOND COMING OF CHRIST AND THE MILLENNIUM**

We believe in the imminent, pretribulational, premillennial return of Jesus Christ in the air for His church. Those who have died in Christ will be resurrected and then those which remain alive will be caught up together with them in the air. There will be seven years of tribulation, after which our Lord Jesus Christ personally and bodily will return to the earth, with the saints, in great power and glory, to bind Satan, place him in the abyss, and establish His millennial Kingdom on earth for 1000 years, lifting the curse which is now upon creation, and restoring Israel to the land.

Isaiah 11:1-9; Zechariah 14:4-11; John 5:28-29, 14:1-3; Acts 1:8-11, 15:16-17, 24:15; Romans 8:23; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12; Titus 2:11-14; Revelation 19:11-16, 20:1-6.

## **S. JUDGMENT**

We believe in two resurrections: the resurrection of the saved at the rapture of the church; the resurrection of the lost at the end of the millennium. All men will be judged: believers before the Judgment Seat of Christ to receive rewards according to their works; unbelievers before the Great White Throne to be condemned to eternal punishment in hell.

Romans 14:10-12; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Hebrews 9:27-28; Revelation 20:11-15.

## **T. THE ETERNAL STATE**

We believe in a literal heaven where those who have received Christ as Savior during their life will live forever with God. Those who die in Christ go immediately into the presence of the Lord. Our dwelling place will be mansions prepared for us by Christ in the presence of God, with no sickness, sorrow, pain, or death.

We believe in a literal hell where those who have not received Christ as their Savior will spend eternity in the awful, conscious torments of hell-fire, prepared for Satan and his angels.

Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9, 2:7-12; Titus 2:11-14; 2 Peter 3:10-13; Jude 1:6-7; Revelation 19:11-16, 20:1-6, 20:11-15, 21:3.



## **U. HUMAN SEXUALITY**

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity should be engaged in, outside of marriage. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, sodomy, bestiality, transvestism, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex and shall not be condoned.

Genesis 2:24, 19:5, 19:13, 26:8-9; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-29; 1 Corinthians 5:1, 6:9; I Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4.

## **V. SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE**

We believe in the sanctity of human life, as man was created in the image of God. We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, inexcusable taking of human life, and is therefore murder. We reject any teaching that abortions due to birth defects, gender selection, population control or the mental well being of the mother are acceptable. We reject the practices of infanticide, euthanasia, mercy killing, and such. These are sinful murders forbidden by God.

Genesis 9:6; Exodus 20:13; Job 3:16; Psalms 51:5, 139:14-16; Isaiah 44:24, 49:1,5; Jeremiah 1:5, 20:15-18; Luke 1:44; Hebrews 9:27.

## **ARTICLE IV: Membership**

### **Section 1. Qualifications.**

The membership of this church shall be composed of persons who have given testimony of their salvation and the basis of their faith to the Deacons, who have experienced believer's baptism by immersion, who have subscribed to the Articles of Faith, the Covenant and the Constitution of the church, and who have been accepted by vote of the church.

### **Section 2. Procedure.**

All persons desiring membership in this church must present themselves at any regular service of the church. They will then meet with the Deacons to give testimony as per Section 1. Upon recommendation of the Deacons, they will be presented to the congregation for vote. There are three ways one can present him/her self for membership:

#### **a. Letter Transfer**

Transfer of a letter of membership from another church of like faith and practice.

**b. Testimony**

Statement of Faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and testimony of baptism by immersion after salvation, by a church of like faith and practice.

**c. Submission**

Statement of Faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and submission to the ordinance of baptism at Upper Cross Roads Baptist Church.

**Section 3. Vote.**

If the vote of the congregation is other than unanimous, the Pastor will call together the Deacons of the church to look into the matter and make a recommendation to the church after careful and prayerful consideration, seeking the will of the Holy Spirit.

**Section 4. Member's Standing.**

Members who have been received into membership in accordance with the procedure set forth in Section 2 of this article, or those who were members prior to the establishment of this procedure, who support the church and faithfully attend the services, and who are not under church discipline are considered members in good standing and are entitled to all the rights and privileges of membership. Members who have not yet reached their eighteenth birthday shall not vote, hold office, or serve on committees.

Members who attend fewer than six services of the church in any six month period, unless providentially hindered or temporarily residing out of the area, shall be moved to an inactive membership list. Inactive members have no right of franchise (voice or vote). For an inactive member to be returned to good standing the person must show obvious (at least six weeks) faithfulness in attending the services of the church. Once a person has been placed upon the "Inactive List," every effort will continue to be made to restore the errant member to fellowship. The list will be formally reported to the church in the next regularly scheduled Quarterly Business Meeting. The Pastor will give report to the church that notification was made, in writing, to the individual involved and/or that every reasonable effort was made to apprise the individual. Thereupon, when the person has been on the "Inactive List" for a period of 6 months, and the individual has neither rendered any effort to return to good standing nor communicated a desire to attend, his name will be presented to the Church for a church vote, whereupon his membership status will be terminated from the church rolls. This procedure will only apply to an individual, and will not apply to the spouse and/or children who are members in good standing.

The Deacons shall have the final say as to a member's standing, if there be any question.

**Section 5. Transfer of Letter.**

Letters of transfer may be granted to any church of like faith and practice for members in good standing. For inactive members or members under church discipline, their

standing will be so noted in the letter. When letters are granted, membership in this church will terminate. When a letter of transfer is requested to a church of another faith or order, a statement will be given indicating the "termination of membership at the individual's request."

#### **Section 6. Termination.**

In addition to the formal procedures outlined in Section 4, when a member of this church joins a church of different faith or order, membership in this church will automatically terminate.

#### **Section 7. Duties.**

In addition to the duties set forth in the church covenant, members are expected to be faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian life; to attend regularly the services of the church; to give regularly and systematically to its support; and to share in its organized work. Furthermore, members are to love, honor, and esteem the Pastor, pray for him, and recognize his authority in spiritual affairs of the church. They are to live a life style in affirmation of the beliefs and practices of the church, as set forth in the Articles of Faith and from the pulpit.

#### **Section 8. Privileges.**

In consideration of the rights and responsibilities involved, only members in good standing have the right to speak, act, and/or vote in the matters of the church. Non-members, regardless of faithfulness in attendance, or contributions given, will have no say or vote in any matters of the church.

#### **Section 9. Discipline & Restoration.**

The panel for hearing all matters of church discipline shall be composed of the Pastor(s) and Deacons. These men have sole authority in determining heretical deviations from the Articles of Faith, or violations of the Church Covenant. Furthermore, whenever a member's behavior exhibits the practice of any of the sins condemned in the following Scripture passages, church discipline may be warranted. (ref. Proverbs 6:16-19, 1 Corinthians 6:9- 10, Galatians 5:19-20, Ephesians 5:3-5, Colossians 3:5,8 & 9, 1 Timothy 6:10, 2 Timothy 3:2-5). If a Pastor or a Deacon is the subject of the disciplinary matter, he shall not sit as a member of that body when the discipline matter is under discussion. All matters of church discipline are to be conducted in accordance with the following steps: (ref. Matthew 18:15-20, Galatians 6:1, 1 Corinthians 6:1-8).

**Step 1.** When a member becomes aware of the offense of another member of such magnitude that it hinders spiritual growth and/or testimony, he or she is to go alone to the offending party and seek to restore the brother or sister. Before he goes, he should first examine himself. When he goes, it should be with a spirit of humility and with the goal of restoration.

**Step 2.** If reconciliation is not reached in step 1, one or two from the Pastor and Deacons are to accompany the one seeking to resolve the matter. This second step should also be preceded by self-examination, exercised in a spirit of humility and with the goal of restoration.

**Step 3.** If the matter is still unresolved after steps 1 and 2 have been taken, the Pastor and Deacons, having Biblical responsibility for putting down murmuring, shall hear the matter privately and in confidence. In the case where a person refuses to meet with the Pastor and/or Deacons, the Deacons shall announce to the congregation that person is suspended from the rights and privileges of membership, and such suspension shall continue in force as long as the situation giving rise to it continues.

**Step 4.** If the matter is still unresolved after the hearing, the individual involved will be notified in writing that disciplinary action is being contemplated. One weeks notice shall be given to the membership that a special meeting is being called for the purpose of considering disciplinary action, without giving the names or the offense.

**Step 5.** At the meeting, the Pastor and Deacons will bring the matter before the church and recommend proper disciplinary action. A two-thirds majority of those present and voting is required to approve the action. Discipline may consist of the following: If the individual is an officer, teacher, worker, or committee member, that person may be removed from the position. The rights and privileges of membership may be suspended for a specific period of time, as recommended by the Pastor and Deacons. The individual may be removed from membership in the church.

**Step 6.** If an unrepentant offending member is removed from church membership, all contact with that person from that point forward, must be for the sake of restoration only, except for family members.

**Step 7.** If a member who has been disciplined shall repent and humbly submit to the imposed discipline, he/she shall afterwards be wholly forgiven and publicly restored to the full fellowship of the church.

## **ARTICLE V: Meetings**

### **Section 1. Worship Services.**

Regular worship services shall be held by the church each Sunday and a mid-week service at a time agreed upon by the church. Revivals, Mission Conferences, and other special services may be held as deemed necessary in the fulfillment of the purpose (Article II).

### **Section 2. The Lord's Supper.**

The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least once a quarter at a time arranged by the Pastor and Deacons.

### **Section 3. Regular Administrative Meetings.**

The church shall hold regular administrative meetings at least once each quarter following a mid-week service. Special administrative meetings may be called by the Pastor or the Deacons at such time as they may be needed, with one week's notice of the time and purpose of meeting given to the congregation. A special meeting may be requested by the congregation through written request submitted to the Deacons and signed by ten percent of the membership who are eligible to vote. All administrative meetings shall be held at the church. The Pastor shall serve as moderator of the administrative meetings of the church. In his absence, or upon his request, the chairman of the Deacons, Vice Chairman of the Deacons, or some other person chosen by the church, may serve as moderator. At the annual and regular church administrative meetings, any reports by heads of organizations, church officers, chairman of the Deacons, chairmen of all standing committees, and/or chairmen of ad-hoc committees of the church shall be submitted in writing in order that the Church Clerk may properly keep the records of the church.

### **Section 4. Annual Administrative Meeting.**

An annual meeting for the election of officers and approval of the annual budget shall be held during November or December, in order that all newly-elected officers will assume office the first of January. The election of church officers and committees shall be by secret ballot. The annual budget shall be voted on by section. A simple majority of a quorum is required for approval. If any section should fail to be approved, it shall be sent back to the Budget and Finance Committee for revision and re-submittal. A full financial report shall be given by the Budget and Finance Committee at the January meeting.

### **Section 5. Quorum.**

A quorum shall consist of one third of the members in good standing who are eligible to vote. The following matters shall be voted on by secret ballot and shall require a quorum to conduct the meeting:

- a. Call or dismissal of a Pastor or Assistant/Associate Pastor.
- b. Amendment or revision of the Constitution and By-Laws.
- c. Borrowing or lending money.
- d. Sale or purchase of real estate property.
- e. Non-budgeted expenditures of three thousand dollars or more.
- f. Addition or deletion of any full or part-time staff positions.
- g. Re-allocation of permanent established funds.
- h. Addition or termination of a missionary for support.
- i. Election of church officers.
- j. Approval of annual budget.
- k. Joining in affiliation with, or separation from, any organization.

All other matters may be conducted by those present and qualified to vote.

## **ARTICLE VI: Church Officers**

### **Section 1. Officers.**

The officers of this church shall be: Pastor, Assistant Pastor(s) as needed, Deacons, Clerk, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Education Director, Sunday School Superintendent, and other such officers as may be required for the work of the church. All of these shall be elected by the church, and shall be members in good standing. Except for Pastor and Assistant Pastor, a simple majority of a quorum is required for election. The outgoing officer(s) will serve as advisor(s) to the incoming officer(s), if needed, for the first quarter of the new year. In the event no one nominee receives a majority, the outcome shall be decided by a run-off election between the two with the highest number of votes. The church shall not call any Pastor or Assistant Pastor, or elect anyone to office who cannot fully, and without mental reservation, subscribe to the doctrinal position as stated in the Articles of Faith (Article III). Any Pastor or officer who, having subscribed and having been elected, shall change his belief after taking office, shall submit his resignation immediately.

### **Section 2. Personnel Selection and Function.**

#### **Section 2a. Pastor, Election.**

Whenever a vacancy occurs, a Pulpit Committee shall be formed for the purpose of seeking out and recommending to the Deacons for approval and then to the church, one qualified man. A thorough investigation shall be made by the Pulpit Committee of the candidate's past life, ministry, and doctrinal teachings before he is invited to candidate. The membership of the Pulpit Committee shall be recommended to the church by the Deacons at an administrative meeting called for this purpose. The committee shall consist of five to seven members and shall include representation from the Deacons, the Sunday School, the Missions Committee, the Budget and Finance Committee, and the membership at large. The Pulpit Committee is authorized to offer a salary & benefits package not to exceed that approved in the current annual budget.

A Pastor shall be called by the church to serve until the relationship is dissolved at the request of either the Pastor or the church. The call of the Pastor shall take place at a meeting especially set for that purpose, of which at least one week's notice has been given to the membership. After approval of the Deacons, the election shall be upon recommendation of the Pulpit Committee appointed to nominate as Pastor, an ordained minister of the gospel whose Christian character and qualifications, as outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, fit him for the office of Pastor of this church. No nomination shall be made except that of the committee. Election shall be by secret ballot, with an affirmative vote of three-fourths majority vote necessary for a call. Should the man recommended by the Pulpit Committee fail to receive a three-fourths majority, the Pulpit Committee will be instructed to seek out another candidate, and the meeting shall be adjourned without debate.

If, at any time, a Pastor's preaching, teaching, or manner of life is not in full accord with the doctrinal position or moral standards of the church, he shall be brought before the Deacons to be restored, disciplined, or relieved of his position, as deemed necessary. If the Pastor is to be relieved of his position, the Deacons shall present the situation to the church congregation for vote, by secret ballot, to terminate or retain the Pastor. Only members in good standing eighteen years of age and older may vote. A three-fourths majority vote is required for termination. If a Pastor resigns, at least thirty days notice shall be given, unless otherwise mutually agreed, with both Pastor and the church seeking to follow the will of God and the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

**Section 2b. Pastor: Duties.**

The Pastor is responsible for the welfare and oversight of the church; he shall be an ex-officio member of all organizations, departments, and committees; he may call a special meeting of the Deacons or any committee. He may appoint ad-hoc committees for special projects. He shall conduct church services on stated and special occasions, administer the ordinances, minister to members of the church and the community, and perform other duties that usually pertain to the office. He shall have special charge of the pulpit ministry of the church, and shall, in cooperation with the Deacons, provide for pulpit supply when he is absent, and arrange for speakers and workers for revival meetings and other special services.

The Pastor shall preside at all meetings of the church, except as otherwise provided in this Constitution and By-Laws. He is the administrative head of the church, and shall, with the deacons, ensure compliance with church policies and this Constitution and By-Laws. He shall supervise, evaluate the job performance of, and arrange and approve all absences and vacations of other church employees.

**Section 2c. Assistant Pastor, Election.**

When the need arises for an addition to the Pastoral staff, a recommendation shall be made to the church by the Pastor and Deacons. The addition of a Pastoral staff position requires a two-thirds majority vote for approval. A salary package proposal shall be prepared by the Deacons and presented to the church. Both the position and the package must be approved, prior to a candidate being sought.

Once these are approved, the Pastor shall seek out a qualified candidate to his liking. The spiritual qualifications for Assistant Pastor are the same as those for Pastor. The candidate must receive unanimous approval by the Deacons before being recommended to the congregation. A two-thirds majority vote is needed for a call. The vote shall be by secret ballot at a special meeting called for the purpose, with at least one week's advance notice of the meeting. Should the candidate fail to receive a two-thirds majority, the Pastor will be instructed to seek another candidate, and the meeting adjourned without debate.

In the event an Assistant Pastor resigns, at least thirty days notice shall be given, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon. If the job performance, preaching, teaching, moral conduct, or interpersonal relationships of an Assistant Pastor are not becoming to a minister of the gospel, he may be dismissed by the Pastor with approval of the Deacons. This action shall only be taken after every effort has been made for reconciliation.

Whenever a vacancy occurs for any reason, it shall be filled by following the above procedure. If the need arises to reduce the Pastoral staff of the church, such action will be recommended to the church by the Pastor and Deacons, and requires a two-thirds majority vote for approval.

#### **Section 2d. Assistant Pastor, Duties.**

In the absence of the Pastor, the Assistant Pastor shall perform all the duties and responsibilities of the Pastor. He shall also have primary responsibility over that segment of the ministry delegated to him by the Pastor. He may be an ex-officio member of designated organizations, departments, and committees in the Pastor's stead, as delegated by the Pastor. Should the position of Pastor become vacant for any reason, the Assistant Pastor(s) may remain until the position of Pastor is filled, at which time he/they may continue at the option of the new Pastor.

#### **Section 2e. Deacons, Election.**

There shall be a minimum of four Deacons. Additional Deacons may be added as the church grows, with a desirable ratio of one Deacon to every seven to ten family units. Special care and much prayer shall be used in selecting men for the office of Deacon. Recommendations may be submitted to the Pastor or current Deacons for consideration. All nominations for the office of Deacon will be made by the existing Deacons. Only men of proven spiritual discernment, loyalty, and faithfulness, who meet the Scriptural qualifications as outlined in Acts 6:3 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13, who have been members in good standing for at least one year may be nominated. Whenever Deacons are to be elected, the names of as many nominees as are qualified shall be placed on the ballot, and the church will elect the required number from those nominated.

Deacons shall be elected for a term of three years, with one third the number being elected each year. After completion of a three year term, no Deacon shall be eligible to re-election until after the lapse of one year. For a man elected for his first term as Deacon at UCRBC, the first year of his term is considered as an internship. During this time he shall have the same rights and responsibilities as the other Deacons, except that he may not hold an office. At the end of the internship, an evaluation will be made by the intern himself, the Pastor, and the Deacons who are not interns. From this evaluation, his time of service may be ended by any of the parties with no animosity.

Should any Deacon not complete his three year term for any reason, the man elected to replace him will serve the remainder of his term, so as not to disrupt the rotation



schedule. He may be eligible for election to a full term after serving this partial term, if nominated.

Deacons shall elect annually, their own chairman, vice chairman, secretary/treasurer, and a Deacon to serve on the Budget and Finance Committee of the church.

**Section 2f. Deacon, Duties.**

Deacons shall at all times consider themselves as servants of The Lord to the church. Their duties and responsibilities shall be:

- a. In cooperation with the Pastor, and by the leading of the Holy Spirit, consider and make recommendations to the church in all matters pertaining to its work and progress.
- b. In cooperation with the Pastor, ensure compliance with this Constitution and By-Laws.
- c. Maintain liaison with all committees.
- d. Have the oversight in all matters of discipline in the church.
- e. Assist the Pastor in shepherding the membership of the church, eliminating, in so far as possible, all divisions; giving counsel, visiting, comforting the sick, and assisting the poor and afflicted.
- f. Assist the Pastor in the observance of the church ordinances.
- g. Give general oversight to the upkeep, repair, and use of church property.
- h. Supervise the financial program of the church.
- i. Keep order in the public assemblies of the church.
- j. If the office of the Pastor is vacant, see to it that the pulpit is supplied.
- k. Interview all those who seek to be baptized or unite with the church.
- l. Welcome visitors to the services.
- m. Provide counsel to the Pastor and Assistant Pastor(s).
- n. See that the needs of the Pastor(s) are supplied, and annually review the compensation package, recommending changes when appropriate.
- o. Annually evaluate the Pastor's ministry in a spirit of love and humility, providing feedback to him concerning strengths and areas needing improvement, and making recommendations on ministry direction.
- p. Approve and record all absences and vacations of the Pastor.
- q. The Deacons shall seek to demonstrate faithfulness in every phase of stewardship and shall constantly encourage and promote the spiritual welfare of every part of the church life.

The Deacons shall meet regularly and may arrange for such subcommittees as are necessary to the discharge of their duties. They shall seek to undergird and strengthen the Pastor's ministry.

The Pastor or chairman of the Deacons may call the Deacons into special session whenever need for such arises.

**Section 2g. Senior Deacon.**

Persons Eligible: Senior men of demonstrated Godly character and background, and whose physical health conditions and/or retirement situation prevent a full 3-year Deacon constitutional term; but, at the same time, individuals who are willing to advise and consult with the Deacons on key issues and/or act as special representatives of the Deacons on special church committees or efforts. All other established Biblical qualifications must be satisfied. Further, Senior Deacons will not be assigned Care Group oversight responsibility.

Term of the Senior Deacon: Election for one year. Each man is recommended by the church to serve as a Deacon during the regular nomination process. The Deacons will then nominate from that list those who meet the qualifications of Senior Deacon and submit those names to the church for approval.

Voting Rights and Privileges: Senior Deacons are eligible to vote.

Limitations: Senior Deacons cannot serve in the official capacity of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, or Secretary.

**Section 2h. Clerk.**

The Church Clerk shall be elected annually. It shall be the duty of the Church Clerk to attend, or be represented at, all church administrative meetings; to keep accurate minutes of all administrative meetings, including a copy of any reports presented at the meeting; to publish and read the minutes of the meetings; to promptly issue letters of transfer as authorized by the church; to contact other churches requesting letters of transfer for new members approved by the church; to preserve all papers and valuable letters that belong to the church, as well as membership and baptismal records; and to keep an account of any special events in the life of the church which are of historical significance. It shall also be the duty of the Church Clerk to see that an accurate roll of the church membership is kept with date and method of admission and dismissal, standing of each member, changes in name, mailing address and other pertinent information. The Church Clerk shall maintain a current copy of the Articles of Faith, Church Constitution and By-Laws, and Church Covenant including any amendments approved by the church. All records are the property of the church and are to be kept in the church office and delivered to the successor upon leaving office.

**Section 2i. Treasurer.**

The Treasurer shall be elected annually. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to keep, in a banking institution approved by the Budget and Finance Committee, all monies, bonds, or securities belonging to the church. All church funds shall be deposited in the bank by the proper persons designated by the Budget and Finance Committee. The Treasurer will keep a current, itemized account of all receipts and disbursements, posting to the proper journal accounts in accordance with good book keeping practices. After review and approval of the Budget and Finance Committee, the Treasurer shall submit, in

writing, an accurate monthly report to the church, in such form as required by the Budget and Finance Committee.

Upon approval of the proper authority, and in accord with the amounts approved in the annual budget, the Treasurer shall make all payments by check, in a timely manner. The Treasurer shall issue salary checks to all church staff and employees on the specified dates, making any necessary tax withholding, and filing the forms and payments to the government as required by federal, state and local laws. The Treasurer's books shall be audited annually as arranged by the Budget and Finance Committee. All books, records and accounts maintained by the Treasurer shall be considered the property of the church, and delivered to the successor upon leaving office. The Treasurer shall, upon invitation, meet with the Deacons, and shall be an ex-officio member of the Budget and Finance Committee.

**Section 2j. Financial Secretary.**

The Financial Secretary shall be elected annually. He/she shall receive all offering envelopes from the money counters, and will maintain careful and confidential records to ensure proper credit of each individual contribution as provided in the record system approved by the Budget and Finance Committee.

He/she shall keep the envelopes for reference, and shall be responsible for preparing and distributing annual statements to all contributors as the church directs. The Financial Secretary shall be an ex-officio member of the Budget and Finance Committee, shall keep minutes of their meetings, and may seek the assistance of the Budget and Finance Committee in the preparation and distribution of annual statements, if required. The Financial Secretary will provide numbered offering envelopes for the membership before the beginning of each new year, and for new members throughout the year at their request.

**Section 2k. Education Director.**

The Education Director shall be elected annually. He shall, in cooperation with the Pastor, have general oversight of the entire educational program of the church. The Sunday School Superintendent, Nursery Director, AWANA Director, VBS Director, and any other education program leader are all under his supervision. He shall be responsible for coordination of all the various educational functions, including their budgets, curriculum, workers, schedules, etc., and the resolution of any problems that may arise. He shall, in cooperation with the responsible leader, approve all materials used and the appointment of all teachers and workers in the educational departments, all of whom must be members in good standing. He shall ensure that all the educational needs of the church are being met, and shall develop new programs as required.

**Section 2l. Sunday School Superintendent.**

The Sunday School Superintendent shall be elected annually. The Superintendent of the Sunday School shall have oversight of the entire school and shall administer its affairs.

He shall acquaint himself with the best methods of church education and endeavor to adopt those which are appropriate in this school. It shall be his duty to meet regularly with his teachers concerning the work of the school, giving advice and receiving suggestions from his co-workers. He shall, in cooperation with the Education Director, provide teacher training opportunities. He shall see that a full and accurate record is kept of the work of the Sunday School. He shall review the curriculum to ensure that it is Biblical and in accordance with the Articles of Faith of this church. He shall, in cooperation with the Education Director and Pastor, determine the number of classes needed, appoint teachers and substitutes, and see that the proper amount of literature is ordered for each class.

### **Section 3. Designation of Corporate Officers.**

In all matters related to civil government and civil organizations, the Chairman of the Deacons shall serve as the President of the corporation, the Vice Chairman of the Deacons shall serve as Vice President of the corporation, the Church Clerk shall serve as Secretary of the corporation, the Church Treasurer shall serve as Treasurer of the corporation, the Chairman of the Budget and Finance Committee shall serve as the Assistant Treasurer of the corporation, and the Deacons shall be understood to be the Trustees of the corporation.

## **ARTICLE VII: Committees**

### **Section 1. Standing Committees**

The church shall elect standing committees as may be deemed necessary to conduct various phases of the church program efficiently and effectively. The church shall at all times have the following standing committees:

- Nominating
- Budget and Finance
- Building and Grounds
- Missions
- Music
- Social
- Flowers and Decorations

All committees shall elect their own chairman annually, and shall keep minutes of their meetings.

### **Section 2. Election of Committees**

The Nominating Committee shall nominate to the church, in the annual administrative meeting, persons to serve for the succeeding year on the standing committees, except the Nominating Committee. The church will vote, in the annual administrative meeting, on each committee as a unit. A simple majority of a quorum is required for approval. In the event that a committee is disapproved, it shall be referred back to the Nominating

Committee for new nominations. The members of the Nominating Committee shall be as follows:

- The Pastor
- The Chairman of the Deacons
- The Education Director
- The Sunday School Superintendent
- The Chairman of each standing committee

### **Section 3. Duties of Standing Committees.**

#### **Section 3a. Nominating Committee.**

This committee must have at least five persons present to conduct a meeting. The Pastor shall chair this committee.

Before the annual administrative meeting and throughout the year, this committee shall have the responsibility of nominating to the church, persons to serve in the various positions and on standing committees of the church, other than itself, when positions become vacant from time to time by: removal, death, expiration of term of office, or failure to function. All nominees must be members in good standing. The committee shall nominate persons for each church office (except Pastor, Assistant Pastor and Deacon) to be elected at the annual administrative meeting.

Each year the membership of the church will be given opportunity to submit recommendations, in writing, to the Nominating Committee prior to the completion of the nomination process. The Nominating Committee shall give consideration to all recommendations received and nominate those most qualified. Primary qualifications are spiritual maturity, faithfulness in attendance and giving, loyalty, and a servant's heart. Each nominee will be approached as to their willingness to serve prior to their name being placed on the ballot. The committee shall strive to distribute the work load among the members, so as not to over burden any one person. The committee shall, whenever possible, seek to nominate more than one person for each office; however, qualifications are not to be relaxed in this effort. There shall be no nominations other than those made by the Nominating Committee.

#### **Section 3b. Budget and Finance Committee.**

This committee shall be composed of at least three members elected from the membership at large in addition to the ex-officio members, which are: the Church Treasurer, the Financial Secretary, and a Deacon. This committee shall meet at regular intervals to consider the financial condition of the church, and shall make regular reports of the same to the church in administrative meetings. This committee shall prepare annually a proposed budget including local expenses, education and missions; and shall submit the same to the church at the annual administrative meeting, or amendments to it at any regular administrative meeting of the church throughout the year. In preparing the budget, the committee shall consult with the head of each

organization of the church. The members of the Budget and Finance Committee shall demonstrate faithfulness in individual stewardship and shall promote regular and Scriptural giving to the Lord's work through the local church.

The Budget and Finance Committee shall give direction to the church Treasurer and the Financial Secretary. The Committee is responsible for maintaining proper records of all financial matters; maintaining insurance policies for property, liability, workmen's compensation, employee medical coverage, and church owned vehicles, as required; counting and depositing the offerings; and maintaining an accurate inventory record of the acquisition (whether through purchase or donation) and disposal of church property and possessions.

### **Section 3c. Building and Grounds Committee.**

This committee shall have at least three members, one of whom shall be a Deacon. The duties of this committee, pertaining to the church buildings, property, and parsonage are:

1. Maintain an awareness of the condition and appearance of the buildings and grounds.
2. Make repairs as required.
3. Make improvements authorized by the church.
4. Perform normal building maintenance including painting, replacement of broken glass and burned out light bulbs, etc.
5. Perform normal grounds maintenance including mowing and trimming, weeding, mulching, and snow removal.
6. Participate in budget preparation by projecting the cost of: a) buildings and grounds maintenance, b) needed improvements, c) major repairs, d) needed new church furnishings and equipment.
7. Promote church energy conservation by turning off lights, setting back thermostats, etc.
8. Ensure compliance with safety, health and fire regulations.

The committee shall be responsible for the work of the custodian and all other persons employed in the capacity of caring for the buildings and grounds. The chairman of the committee shall be responsible for purchasing housekeeping supplies.

The custodian shall be recommended, with approval of the Pastor, to the church by the Building and Grounds Committee for contract or employment by church action. It shall be the committee's responsibility to see that the physical property is cared for so as to contribute to the comfort and well being of the members and visitors at all services. They are responsible for the cleanliness, ventilation, upkeep, and securing of the buildings. They shall see that the grounds are kept in such a way as to be honoring of God's house.

### **Section 3d. Missions Committee.**

The duties and responsibilities of the Missions Committee are as follows:

1. Prepare the missions budget annually, and submit it to the Budget and Finance Committee for inclusion in the proposed church budget.
2. Encourage communication with, and prayer for, our missionaries.
3. Keep the church apprised of happenings, needs, and status of our missionaries.
4. Encourage interest in and giving to missions.
5. Encourage our church young people to consider the Lord's call to missions.
6. Plan an annual Missions conference including speaker, program, housing and meals for guest missionaries.
7. Periodically review levels of support and status of our current missionaries and recommend changes to the church when appropriate.
8. When possible, encourage our missionaries by: sending the Pastor to visit one mission field annually, youth missions trip, and/or a work group from the church.
9. As the church is financially able to expand the missions program, review prospective missionaries, select and recommend to the church for support, those who are: a) saved, baptized, and called, b) in agreement with our doctrinal position, c) going to a field for which we have a burden, d) being sent out by Upper Cross Roads Baptist Church or a church of like faith and practice, e) with a sending agency that we can agree with in doctrine and practice, and, f) The Holy Spirit leads us to support.

### **Section 3e. Music Committee.**

The Music Committee, in cooperation with the Pastor, shall seek to strengthen the music program of the church. Their duties and responsibilities include:

1. Participate in the annual budget preparation by giving input to the Budget and Finance Committee on the projected cost of music for the coming year.
2. Plan both congregational and special music for regular and special services.
3. Continuously review the music of the church to ensure that it is both Scriptural and appropriate.
4. Encourage the membership to develop and use their musical talents for the Lord.

### **Section 3f. Social Committee.**

The Social Committee enhances the fellowship aspect of the church by planning and serving at social functions. Their duties and responsibilities include:

1. Project budget requirements for the coming year for food, paper and plastic ware, water cooler supplies, etc., and submit to the Budget and Finance Committee for inclusion in the proposed annual church budget.
2. Plan and coordinate food preparation and service for all social events on the church calendar such as: Mother-Daughter Banquet, Mission Emphasis Sundays, Missions Conference, Thanksgiving Dinner, AWANA closing program, etc.
3. Prepare for "emergency" functions such as: funerals, going-away activities, etc., requesting people from the church to provide the food.

### **Section 3g. Flowers and Decorations Committee.**

The Flowers and Decorations Committee shall arrange for flowers to be sent to members in the hospital, funerals, and such occasions. They are also responsible for providing flower arrangements for church worship services and decorating the church for holidays and special occasions.

### **Section 4. Other Standing Committees.**

Other standing committees may be elected as desired by the church and serve for the purpose designated. Duties of all standing committees shall be defined in writing and adopted by vote of the church. Standing committees, other than those called out in Section 1 of this Article, may be created or dissolved by a majority vote of those present and voting at any regular or called administrative meeting of the church upon recommendation of the Pastor and Nominating Committee.

### **Section 5. Ad-Hoc Committees.**

Ad-Hoc Committees shall be appointed by the Pastor and announced to the church, except for a Pulpit Committee, which shall be elected when needed as specified in Article VI, Section 2.a. They may be formed for specific purposes as a need arises. In any case, Ad-Hoc Committees shall be disbanded when they have completed the assigned task.

## **ARTICLE VIII: General**

### **Section 1. License.**

If a member in good standing requests of the church a license to preach, and gives testimony that he feels called to the ministry; the church may, by majority vote, license him to preach. The license is an acknowledgment of the church's faith in his moral character and spiritual integrity, and is their commendation of him to the brethren at large and their encouragement to him to make further preparation for the ministry.

The church Clerk shall furnish one who is licensed to preach with a copy of the minutes and a certificate of license as his credentials. It is understood that performance of civil duties by one who is licensed shall be governed by state law.

### **Section 2. Ordination.**

In the event this church is requested to ordain a member to the ministry, a vote of three-fourths of the members present and voting shall be required at any regular or called administrative meeting of the church.

Before the church proceeds with the ordination, it shall form an ordination council to examine the candidate. The church may invite ordained ministers of like-minded Baptist Churches to serve on the council, along with ordained ministers or Deacons from UCRBC and members of the candidate's family, if qualified. All members of the council must be approved by the Pastor. The council will be chaired by the Pastor and one council



member will be appointed to keep notes, which shall be kept as part of the permanent church records.

The council shall examine the candidate in the following areas:

- Testimony of Salvation\*
- Call to Ministry
- Education
- Priorities\*
- Scriptural qualifications
- Doctrine

The council shall report their recommendation to the church. In the event the council gives a favorable recommendation, the church shall proceed with the ordination. The candidate shall be issued a Certificate of Ordination signed by the members of the council.

\*The candidate's wife is to be included in these areas.

### **Section 3. Ordination of Deacons.**

In the event the church elects as a Deacon, a member who has not previously been ordained (set apart) to the ministry of a Deacon at UCRBC or in a Church of like faith and practice, the Pastor and Deacons shall arrange for a service for the public dedication of this individual, after he has completed his internship.

### **Section 4. Affiliation and Associations.**

We are an independent, fundamental body, and as such we believe in ecclesiastical separation. The church shall not join any association which infringes upon local autonomy. Should the church desire to affiliate with an organization, there must first be doctrinal agreement, approval by the Pastor and Deacons, then a two-thirds majority vote of a quorum would be required for church approval.

The church, as a corporate body, may associate itself, in cooperation with other churches and/or organizations, for limited and specific causes in fulfillment of our purpose, even though we may not agree in all matters of faith and practice. Such cooperative associations must not require us to compromise any of our standards or beliefs, must have the approval of the Pastor and Deacons, and a majority vote of those present and voting at any regular or called administrative meeting of the church.

### **Section 5. Employment.**

All persons employed by the church in full time or part time positions shall subscribe to The Articles of Faith of UCRBC. Note: This applies to direct employees, not contract labor. Candidates to fill positions will be interviewed, selected, and hired by the Pastor. The Pastor may also, with reasonable cause, fire any such employee.

## **Section 6. Finances.**

This church and all its various ministries and functions shall be supported by free will offerings, without resorting to commercial money-making schemes.

## **Section 7. Definitions.**

**Section 7a. Ex-officio**, as used in this constitution, means: By virtue of the office. Ex-officio members may participate and vote at meetings, but may not be elected chairman.

**Section 7b. Ad hoc**, as used in this constitution, means: Temporarily established for a specific purpose. An ad hoc committee is terminated when its specific task is completed.

**Section 7c. Like faith and practice.** As used in this constitution: **Like** means the same as, or similar to. **Faith** refers to the beliefs, doctrines, and teachings. **Practice** refers to methods, means, customs and conventions. Therefore, **Like Faith and Practice** means that the organization in question would have no important disagreements with our Articles of Faith (Article III of this Constitution and By-Laws), and we would have no important disagreement with theirs, and that the methods employed by them are similar to our own, and would not create a poor testimony, cause confusion or be an embarrassment to the cause of Christ.

## **ARTICLE IX: Adoption and Amendments**

### **Section 1. Adoption.**

This Constitution and By-Laws supersedes any and all previous Constitutions. It shall be considered as adopted, and in immediate effect, if and when it is accepted by a two-thirds majority vote at a meeting called for that purpose. Copies shall have been made available, in writing, and the date and time of the meeting announced at least thirty days prior to the vote (in compliance with the provisions of the previous constitution).

### **Section 2. Amendments.**

This Constitution and By-Laws, or any part of it, may be amended by a two thirds majority vote of a quorum at an administrative meeting of the church specially called for the purpose, except that any amendment or revision of the Articles of Faith (Article III) requires a three-fourths majority vote. Any proposed amendment must first be approved by the Deacons, then made available to the membership, in writing, and notification given of the date and time of the meeting, at least two weeks prior to the meeting. A record shall be kept by the Church Clerk of all amendments proposed and the adoption proceedings. Any amendment adopted shall be filed with the State in accordance with the Laws of the State of Maryland.

## **ARTICLE X: Church Covenant**

Believing that we have obtained the saving mercies of God on the sole basis of Jesus' substitutionary life and death; and having marked our faith by obedience to water baptism; and believing that God has directed us to unite with this church body as a local expression of His body, the church, we do joyfully but with sobriety enter into this covenant and will strive to live out the principles of this covenant with each other before the Lord.

**Faithfulness in Purpose:** Believing that God has ordered His church to certain clear purposes, we covenant to engage in faithful and passionate worship, glorifying the Lord our God in all we do, magnifying His holy character, proclaiming His faithful acts through song and thanksgiving, speaking through such worship to each other of the inestimable value of our God (Deuteronomy 6:4-6). We covenant to speak the message of salvation through personal evangelism and corporate ministries, promoting the propagation of the Gospel both here and around the world, supporting with our service and sacrifice a global outreach. We covenant to build up the body of Christ through teaching, mentoring, exhorting and correcting one another in the spirit of love, rooting our ministry in the Scriptures. We covenant to seek to know what God is doing in our community and to use those gifts entrusted to us to serve one another.

**Faithfulness in Disposition and Love:** Believing that God has saved us and placed us into this body, we commit to a gracious disposition towards each other in Christian love (Mark 12:30-31; John 13:34-35). We commit to reject gossip and slanderous communications. We commit to seek reconciliation, valuing the bonds of our fellowship. Like our Lord, we do not speak lightly of any sin, yet we would rather travel the painful path of reconciliation than the easy path of quick censure or the misguided path of artificial unity that ignores sin. If we must part ways, may it rend our hearts that such a breach occurred.

**Faithfulness in Character and Behavior:** Believing that we have been called to holy living as revealed in God's wisdom and decrees, we covenant to walk in grace to overcome those sins that marked us prior to our salvation and that hound us as we walk through this world. These sins include but are not limited to pride, slander, gossip, all sexual behaviors outside the bonds of marriage, homosexual sex, pornography, hatred, lying, unrighteous anger, gluttony, sloth, bullying, judgmentalism, profane uses of electronic media, disrespect, drunkenness, abuse, and misuse of regulated or illegal substances. We reject those behaviors and attitudes that God has rejected directly or in principle and will seek to live in the strength of His grace unto obedience.

Regarding topics not exhaustively addressed in Scripture, either directly or by application of biblical principle, we refuse judgmental and divisive attitudes. Scripture is the inspired Word of God and most suitable for all training in righteousness (II Timothy 3:16-17), yet Christians must be respectful of fellow believers' consciences, for all must

give an account to God for their choices. Stronger Christians must not be unconcerned about their weaker brethren and weaker brethren must not condemn the sincere choices of the stronger brethren. All must be governed by love (Romans 14; I Corinthians 8).

**Faithfulness in Discipleship:** Believing we have been saved to reflect the glory of God in this world, we covenant to maintain faithfulness in church, family, and private discipleship; faithfulness in giving to the Lord and His work; and faithfulness in supporting the work and vision of the church. If God, in His providence, removes us from this church, we covenant to seek union with another local church as soon as God directs us.

## **APPENDIX A: Rules of Order**

For the conduct of Church administrative meetings, "Let all things be done decently and in order." (1 Corinthians 14:40)

### **REGULAR ADMINISTRATIVE MEETINGS**

#### **I. Usual agenda of a regular administrative meeting.**

A. Prayer and meditation.

B. Reading of minutes of previous meeting.

C. Report of Church Treasurer.

Note: A motion "to consider" items 2. and 3. is not necessary. These are regular reports before the church. They are to be read first, then a motion to approve as read, a second, discussion, and a vote on the motion is the proper order.

D. Report(s) of other church officers, if any. These reports are to include reports of any actions assigned to the officer by church motions previously approved.

E. Unfinished business. These are items tabled or postponed from the previous meeting. If a motion was made in the previous meeting, another motion is not needed. The matter is before the church and must be acted upon.

F. Reports of Committees. Reports from committees must give the status of actions required by previous motions approved by the church, until such actions are completed.

G. New Business. It is the privilege of any member in good standing to present any matter which, in that person's judgment, should come to the attention of the church. However, such procedure is usually unwise unless the member is prepared to make a

motion and unless the counsel of the committee or officer responsible for the matter has been sought.

1. Consideration of the recommendations of the Deacons.
2. Authorization of non-budgeted expenditure of money.
3. Consideration of major repairs or replacement of equipment.

H. Granting of letters of dismissal, if any.

## **II. Items usually considered in a special administrative meeting.**

No items of business shall be considered in such meetings except for the one matter for which the meeting is called. The following matters would normally be handled in a special administrative meeting:

- A. Call or dismissal of a Pastor.
- B. Amendment to the Constitution and By-Laws.
- C. Church Discipline.
- D. Sale or purchase of Real Estate Property.
- E. Approval of a major building program.

## **III. Procedures to be followed concerning conduct, reports, motions, resolutions, etc.**

- A. All matters shall be handled in a Christ-like manner. If, at any time, in the judgment of the moderator, the tone and spirit of the meeting becomes critical, divisive, or breeds strife, then the moderator shall dismiss the meeting and the matter be referred to prayer.
- B. A matter may not be discussed until a motion has been made and seconded.
- C. If a motion is made by a body, such as a committee or the Deacons, the person seconding it may not be a member of that same body, since this would effectively be seconding one's own motion.
- D. Once a motion has been made and seconded, it must be voted upon unless withdrawn by the one making it and the one seconding it.
- E. During the discussion of a motion, a new motion dealing with the same or another subject matter may not be presented. The discussion shall be limited to the motion before the church.

F. To provide opportunity for everyone to participate, each person shall limit his remarks to a maximum of three minutes during discussion. The moderator shall grant the floor to each person who desires to participate in the discussion, in turn, before anyone is permitted to speak the second time. In all cases, only one person shall speak at a time.

G. An amendment to a motion may change neither the meaning nor the purpose of the original motion. It is concerned with method, clarification, time, place, persons, etc. At times an amendment, as proposed, would have the effect of changing the meaning or purpose of the original motion. In such cases, it is the duty of the moderator to rule that the adoption of such an amendment would deny the meaning or purpose of the original motion, and is consequently out of order.

H. If an amendment to a motion is accepted by the original mover and seconder, no vote on the amendment is necessary. When an amendment is accepted, either as stated above or by majority vote, then a vote on the original motion, as amended, following any further discussion, is in order.

I. There are other specific motions which are always in order when a matter is under discussion. These are:

1. A motion to "table" the matter,
2. A motion to commit the matter to a committee,
3. A motion to postpone action,
4. A motion to call for the question,
5. A motion to adjourn,
6. A motion to reconsider, and
7. Others.

Note: None of these motions can be made while another member is speaking, or a vote is being taken. While such motions are always in order, it is often unwise to make use of them. Any time one of these specific motions is made and seconded (except for the call for the question, which does not require a second), it shall be voted upon immediately and without debate. If it passes, it's intent will take effect immediately and without further discussion. Comments on each type follow:

1. The effect of a motion to "table" a matter is to postpone action. The "tabled" motion will be considered at a subsequent meeting as though it had been made at that meeting.

2. The effect of a motion to "commit to a committee" is to postpone action in the belief that the matter under discussion merits further study. It means that the majority believes that careful study by the smaller group would be profitable to all. The findings

and recommendations of the committee shall be presented to the church at a subsequent meeting.

3. The effect of a motion to "postpone action" is the same as to commit to a committee, except that no committee is assigned to study the matter, rather all the membership at large are granted time to gather further information.

4. A "call for the question" is to call for the cessation of discussion, and immediate action on the motion before the church. It should be seldom used in a church body, because the effect of it is to deny opportunity for discussion to some. A call for the question does not require a second. When such a motion is made, the moderator shall say, "Shall the main question be put now?" If the vote is affirmative, the motion must be acted upon by the body without further discussion.

5. The effect of a motion "to adjourn" is to cut off further discussion without an opportunity for a vote, unless there is a condition of time in the motion. If the body decides to adjourn at a given time, it is the duty of the moderator, without another motion, to adjourn when the hour arrives.

6. A motion "to reconsider" has reference to a motion which has formerly been adopted. Such a motion can only be made by a person who voted with the majority when the original motion was passed. If this motion prevails, the original motion is considered to be before the church as though it had never been acted upon.

7. Any member has the right to appeal a ruling of the moderator, although such action should be rare. In the case of an appeal, the moderator shall say, "Shall the appeal be sustained?" If the majority votes not to sustain the appeal, then the ruling of the moderator stands. If the majority votes to sustain the appeal, then the ruling of the moderator does not stand.

8. It is the duty of the moderator to call to order any member, who in any discussion or otherwise, violates any regular rule of order. Moreover, any member has the right to call a "point of order", if in his judgment the moderator has failed to observe or has wrongly interpreted the rules of order or procedure. In the event the moderator refuses to recognize the point of order raised, then an appeal to his decision may be made as stated in Item 10 above.

#### **IV. Miscellaneous Matters.**

A. In stating a motion, or when one is being made or acted upon, the person having the floor shall stand. The moderator shall stand when he has not granted the floor to another.

B. In the event of a tie vote, the moderator may vote, or decline to vote. If he declines, the matter is decided in the negative, since there was not a majority as is required for it to pass.

C. No member may speak on a matter prior to making a motion, unless he is explaining why such a motion should be made. However, it is better to make the motion, get a second to it, and then explain the motion.

D. All motions should be written out and handed to the clerk, so as to have an accurate record of the wording. The written motion should be prepared ahead so that it can be handed in at the time the motion is made.

**Addendum to the Constitution: May 26, 2002**

- Senior Deacon added (Section 2g).
- Removal of Inactive Member process formalized (Article IV, Sections 4 & 6).

**Addendum to the Constitution: January 12, 2020**

- Covenant revised (Article X).