

**Sherwood Forest Missionary
Baptist Church
Constitution and Bylaws
Revised and Updated Copy
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Constitution of the Sherwood Forest Missionary Baptist Church

Preamble

To preserve and make secure the principles of our faith and to provide for the orderly conduct of the affairs of this body of believers, Sherwood Forest Missionary Baptist Church, consistent with the teaching of the New Testament and the accepted tenets of missionary Baptist churches, the Southern Baptist Convention, the Baptist State Convention of Georgia and the Floyd County Baptist Association: to preserve the liberties inherent in each individual member of this church; and to other churches of the same faith; we do declare and establish the Constitution.

Article I: Name

The church was duly constituted as the Sherwood Forest Missionary Baptist Church by its church body having situs in Floyd County, Georgia, and hereafter to be referred to in any official transactions, both religious and legal, by the above set forth name. The Sherwood Forest Missionary Baptist Church was constituted March 11th, 1961 and incorporated in the spring of 1971. Should a division among members occur, the group that remains true to the tenants herein shall retain all properties.

Article II: Vision Statement

Sherwood Forest Missionary Baptist Church is **a fellowship of love**, showing the love of Christ to all people according to His love and grace towards a personal relationship with Christ himself (Phil. 2:1-2), **praising the Savior**, bringing God glory and ushering the body of Christ into the presence of God that we might experience His Holiness (Eph. 5:19-21), **praying for revival**, to support the Church in all ministries through prayer that God's power would be unleashed and bring about His Kingdom purpose in this world (John 17:1-4), **proclaiming the gospel**, locally, across the state, across our nation and around the world through praying for, giving to, and going on missions (Matt. 28:18-28), **preparing the saints**, we exist to assist in the making and maturing of disciples for the glory of Christ (Deut. 4:10), **and promoting ministry**, providing opportunities for the body of Christ to exercise their spiritual gifts and meet the needs of other Christians and the world for the glory of God. (Gal. 6:9-10)

Article III: Purpose

Sherwood Forest Baptist Church is organized for the purpose of advancing and promoting the worship of God through the reading and study of the Holy Bible as the revealed inerrant word of God, the teaching and preaching of the Gospel of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, conducting regular services of worship for the spiritual training, development, and benefit of each member, and for the winning of souls to Jesus Christ as set forth in the Great Commission. This church shall be missionary in spirit, extending the Gospel through our organized religious channels; the Southern Baptist Convention, International Mission Board, the Georgia Baptist Convention, and the Floyd County Baptist Association, to the entire world. It shall exist to provide regular opportunities for public worship, to sustain the ordinances, doctrines and ethics set forth in the New Testament for the church of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to channel its offerings to the support of the work of the Kingdom of God.

Article IV: Membership

Section 1: Baptism by Immersion

The membership of this church shall consist of persons who have confessed Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord culminating in a public profession of faith; who have been baptized by immersion; and who have been received into membership by a called vote of the church.

Section 2: Letter of Transfer – In

A member of another church of like faith may be received by vote of the church upon promise of letter of transfer from the church where membership resides. The person applying for membership by letter of transfer will be in an associate member relationship until such letter of transfer is received from the other church. The person applying for membership will be an associate member for sixty days or until receipt of letter.

Section 3: Statement of Faith

Anyone who has once been a member of another church of like faith and in consequence of peculiar circumstances has lost that relationship or is not able otherwise to promise a letter of transfer may be received into the fellowship of this church upon statement to the membership and by vote of the church.

Section 4: Application for Membership

Application for membership under circumstances other than those described in Section 1, 2, and 3 above will be considered by the deacon body, whose recommendation will be presented to the church in conference, and the decision of the church will be final in each case.

Section 5: Letter of Transfer - Out

Any member wishing to transfer to another church may do so by placing themselves under the watch-care of that church and applying for their letter through the clerk. Members, however, who are moving out of town may call for their letter, secure and carry same with them, so long a request for the letter is made to a specific Baptist church. They shall consider themselves a member of this church, from which their letter was granted, until the letter so granted is deposited with the church to which it was granted, and this church is notified of their acceptance. Letters granted in this manner shall have a valid date of ninety days. All requests for church letters shall be made through the church clerk, who, after determining that such member is in good standing, shall then present the request to the church in regular conference.

Section 6: Membership Voting

Every member of the church, sixteen years or older, is entitled to vote in all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference provided the member is present. A vote-counting committee, consisting of three members, shall be appointed by the church nominating committee annually.

Section 7: New Member Orientation

All candidates for membership will be expected to participate in the church's new member orientation plan as provided before full membership will be extended. New member orientation will be provided by the discipleship training department.

Section 8: Membership Expectations

All members, except for those designated as shut-ins and those who have been granted a "leave of absence" as noted herein, shall be expected to: (1) be faithful in all duties essential to the Christian life, including regular attendance at the services of the church; (2) give regularly of time, talents, tithes and offerings in the support of the church and its missionary efforts; and (3) share in the work of its organizations.

Section 9: Inactive Membership

Any member of this church shall be placed on an inactive list when the member has shown no apparent interest in the church for a period of a year. Before such action is taken, every reasonable effort will be made in the spirit of love to encourage that person to renew fellowship and participation with the church. No member on the inactive list shall have voting power or hold office. Voting privileges may be regained after a member has been put back on the active church roll.

Section 10: Procedure for Licensing and Ordination

A. Licensing.

Any male member may request the church to license him for the gospel ministry after giving evidence of a divine call. After examination by the Deacon Body and upon recommendation of the Pastor, he shall be voted on by the church in regular conference.

B. Ordination

Any male member may request to be ordained for the gospel ministry after giving evidence of a divine call and manifesting the gifts of grace belonging to the ministry. He must first state that he accepts without reservation the articles of faith of this church and must be recommended by the pastor of this church. The ordination council composed of ordained ministers selected or approved by the pastor, shall thoroughly examine the candidate in regard to his doctrinal soundness, moral and spiritual qualifications and personal fitness for the ministry. After satisfactory examination by the council, he shall be recommended to the church for ordination. The candidate's ordination shall require ratification of the council's recommendation by the church.

C. Revoking Licensing or Ordination

Should the member who has been licensed or ordained become an offense to the church, by reason of immoral, un-Christian conduct, or by his persistent breach of these covenant vows, his license, and/or ordination may be revoked by recommendation by the deacon body and vote of the church.

Article V: Church Covenant

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

1. That we will exercise a mutual care as members one of another, love to His glory as our common Lord. We do, therefore, in His strength engage: to promote the growth of the whole body in Christian knowledge, holiness and comfort, to the end that we may stand perfect and complete in the will of God.

2. To promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; and hold constant communion with each other; that we will cheerfully and regularly contribute of our property to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

3. We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances.

4. That we will be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks and other mind altering substances and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

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

6. That we will walk circumspectly in the world, not conforming to it; that we may win souls, remembering that God has not given us the spirit of fear but of love and of a sound mind; that we are the light of the world and the salt of the earth; and that a city set on a hill cannot be hid.

7. That we will frequently exhort and, if occasion shall require, admonish one another according to Matthew 18:6-20 in the spirit of meekness, considering ourselves lest we also be tempted; and that as in baptism we have been buried with Christ and raised again, so there is on us a special obligation thenceforth to walk in newness of life.

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

9. And may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant make us perfect in every good work to do His will, working that which is well pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever.

Article VI: Articles of Faith

Our articles of faith are included in the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention.

1. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

2. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

A. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

B. God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

3. Man

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

4. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

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

5. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility. All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the

power of God through faith unto salvation.

6. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture. The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

7. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

8. The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

9. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

10. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

11. Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

12. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people. In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

13. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

14. Cooperation

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

15. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

16. Peace and War

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war. The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

17. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

18. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race. The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the

God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation. Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Article VII: Meetings

Section 1: Church Meetings

The church shall hold regular services of worship at least two times on each Lord's Day, each Wednesday night, and at any other time the church deems necessary.

Section 2: Business Meetings

This church shall hold regular business meetings on the second Sunday night for the disposition of all business matters not otherwise provided for, to hear reports from the various church organizations and to consider other matters essential to the spiritual welfare and prosperity of the congregation.

Section 3: Other Meetings

Other meetings of the church as a whole or of authorized groups within the church may be set according to the needs of the congregation.

Section 4: The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper shall be observed on the first Sunday of each quarter, rotating from morning service to night service each time. It may also be observed more often if approved by the church.

Section 5: The Church Covenant

The Church Covenant shall be read on the first Sunday of each quarter during the Observance of the Lord's Supper.

Article VIII: Church Officers

The officers of this church shall be a pastor and other vocational leadership as needed; deacons, clerk, treasurer, and such officers as shall be required to do the work of the church in any of its departments or organizations. All of these shall be elected by the church and shall be members in good standing at the time of election.

Article IX: Election and Duties of the Church Staff.

A. Pastor

Section 1: Call

Whenever a vacancy occurs, 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. In either case at

least a thirty-day notice shall be given of termination of the relationship, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon, with both pastor and church seeking to follow the will of God through the leadership of the Holy Spirit. A pulpit committee shall be selected by the body of deacons and be elected by the church to seek a minister of the gospel whose Christian character and qualifications fit him for the office. The committee shall be composed of one representative from each of the following organizations: body of deacons, Sunday school department, church training department, WMU, brotherhood, and music. The committee shall elect its own chairman. The committee shall bring only one name at a time for the consideration of the church; and no nominations shall be made except by the committee. Election shall be by secret ballot with an affirmative vote of three-fourths of the voting membership present to constitute a call. The election and 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 the membership. Should the minister recommended by the committee fail to receive three-fourths' vote, they will be instructed to seek out another minister.

Section 2: Spiritual Leader

The pastor will be the spiritual leader of the congregation and, as such, he will assume appropriate responsibility for the spiritual welfare of every resident member. Specifically, the pastor's duties will include:

- a. Planning, supervising and implementing the kind of worship services which bring Christians to maturity through the worship of God.
- b. Planning, supervising and implementing an effective program of Christian education for all ages.
- c. Planning, supervising and implementing a redemptive program of practical ministry involving the congregation, to the members, other Christians and non-Christians in the area.
- d. Planning, and conducting a periodic new member orientation class and a class for prospective members.
- e. Guiding the congregation in a positive relationship to the Floyd County Baptist Association, the Georgia Baptist State Convention, the Southern Baptist Convention and other Christian institutions.
- f. Ordering his personal ministry to the congregation according to appropriate priorities
- g. The pastor will make every effort to visit or make a similar contact to every active church family annually involving crisis ministry and routine responsibilities.
- h. Being an ex officio member of all standing or special committees elected by the church; attendance upon these committees will be expected except when the substance of committee business would make his presence unnecessary or inappropriate.
- i. Being responsible for obtaining guest ministers and other speakers when away from the pulpit; working with elected committees for obtaining speakers for other special services such as revival, homecoming, etc.
- j. The pastor shall supervise all paid church staff and direct them in performing their prescribed duties according to their job descriptions.

Section 3: Deacon Support

The congregation will expect the pastor and the deacons to work in harmony, openness and mutual confidence in all affairs of the church.

Section 4: Congregational Support

The pastor can expect the personal and professional support and encouragement of the congregation.

Section 5: Vacation

The pastor will have one week of vacation with full pay salary, annually, with the church paying the supply minister. This will increase to two weeks after five years tenure and three weeks after fifteen years of service. Vacation days are not cumulative.

Section 6: Paid Family Leave

The pastor will be given full salary for one week absence annually, due to illness or death or personal reasons in his immediate family, with the church paying the supply minister. Leave days are not cumulative.

Section 7: Absence for Professional Activities

The pastor will be given the privilege of being absent two Sundays, annually, in revivals or other professional activities (Southern Baptist Convention) with the honorarium for the supply minister being paid by the pastor unless the activity is Church sponsored.

Section 8: Disability

If the pastor is unable to assume duties because of physical disabilities, he shall continue to receive salary and benefits for a period of six months according the following schedule: three months at full salary and benefits, three months at 50% salary and benefits. At the end of this time, he will be relieved of the pastoral duties of the church unless other provisions are made.

Section 9: Resignation

The pastor may terminate his position by a letter of resignation to the church clerk, giving a minimum notice of thirty days.

Section 10: Termination

The congregation may terminate the services of the pastor with a recommendation from the deacons and a majority vote of the voting membership present at a regular or called church conference. The deacons shall inform the pastor and membership of such an impending action a minimum of one month before a church conference. Each resident member is to receive a written notice stating the time and purpose of this said conference, at least two weeks prior to the conference. This one month provision shall be waived with regard to removal of the pastor from the pulpit in extreme cases, such as immoral conduct. The body of deacons shall be empowered, upon their unanimous vote, to place the pastor on leave of absence with pay until such time as the termination issue is decided in conference. Should the pastor be dismissed by the church according to the above stipulations, the church would continue his full salary and benefits for a minimum of four weeks while securing other ministers to lead worship.

B. Deacons

Section 1: Deacon Qualifications

- a. A deacon must be born again of the spirit of God and willing to give his Christian testimony to the church membership.
- b. Believe that the Bible is the infallible Word of God, and subscribe to the Articles of Faith of the Sherwood Forest Baptist Church.
- c. Believe that it is every Christian's responsibility to be a personal soul winner and will do his best to be a soul winner.
- d. Believe that it is the obligation of every Christian to obey the Great Commission as found in Matthew 28:19-20.
- e. Believe in, and practice tithing as a minimum expression of our love for God through the church.
- f. Not have any serious domestic trouble. He must know how to rule his own home well before becoming a leader in the church.
- g. He and his wife must know how to hold their tongues against spreading gossip or talking critically about others.
- h. Not be involved in gambling.
- i. Handle his own business affairs in a way that is above approach, possessing a good name among the people of his community.
- j. Not indulge in social drinking, nor in any way be addicted to alcohol, drugs, or mind altering substances.
- k. Be in good humor with the church and its members, with his brother deacons, and with the pastor. He should work with them on the basis of frank brotherly love, confidence and cooperation.
- l. Will try to put down murmurings and complaining as he would smother a fire, facing them frankly, dealing with them fairly, and standing loyally with the majority of the church in their decisions.
- m. He should be willing to serve when service is needed; to the best of his ability. He should be willing to work at an assigned task conscientiously and, if he is unable to carry out his responsibilities as an elected deacon, to resign.
- n. Will attend the services of his church, supporting them with his good will, presence, prayer and contributions.
- o. Will keep the observance of the Lord's Day above reproach.
- p. Will work for the enlistment and active advancement in the work of the church.
- q. Should be an active member of Sherwood Forest Baptist Church for at least one year prior to election; be a Christian at least two years and be twenty-one years old or above.
- r. A deacon does not have to be married in order to qualify to serve.

Section 2: Deacon Nomination and Election

The active body of deacons shall consist of a sufficient number of members to fulfill the deacon responsibility to the church. The deacons shall be elected from among those members who have proven themselves to have the scriptural qualifications according to 1 Timothy 3, Titus 1 and Acts 6. They shall be elected by secret ballot for a term of three years. They shall serve on a rotating plan with one-third of the active deacons retiring after each year and shall not be eligible for re-election until after a period of one year has elapsed. Nine deacons are presently serving. This number may be increased as needed to ensure proper care and oversight of the church family. Deacons may be nominated from those who have already been ordained and have been a member of this church for at least one year or from non-ordained members who are qualified and have been a member of this church for at least two years.

On or before the first Sunday in April of each year, the chairman of the deacons shall appoint a deacon nominating committee consisting of three active deacons. The membership of this committee shall be announced in the church bulletin and from the pulpit on the second Sunday in April, at which time a nomination ballot will be given to each adult member of the church to submit two names of men that they would like to see considered as deacons to the nominating committee. The deacon nominating committee shall then submit to the deacon body a list of proposed nominees. The deacon body shall have the responsibility of selecting from the list so submitted or from other members of the church deemed morally and spiritually qualified, at least two nominees for each vacancy to be filled. The list of nominees as approved by the deacon body shall be submitted to the congregation at least one month prior to election. The election will be during the morning service on the third Sunday in May.

All deacon candidates are to be interviewed by the members of the deacon body and the pastor prior to election. This is not a screening process; rather it is a process which will explain the scriptural requirements and responsibilities and obligations of the deacon to the church.

The nominees receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected. Deacons retiring from active participation by rotation shall retain their title of deacon and may be called upon for service by the church at any time but shall be ineligible for re-election to the active deacon body until at least one year has elapsed following their retirement from this service. When a vacancy arises on the active body of deacons due to resignation, removal, or death, the remaining active deacons will nominate to the congregation a replacement to fill the un-expired term: This nomination will be made from among the ordained deacons of the church not actively serving. If the vacancy occurs one month before or one month after the regular annual deacon election, one of the three deacons scheduled to rotate off active service may be nominated by the deacons and thereafter elected to serve the remainder of the un-expired term by the church in business meeting. A deacon who has served for more than half a term shall not be eligible for re-election for a period of one year. Ballots of the deacon election shall be kept strictly confidential by the counting committee (the three retiring deacons) and shall not be shared with deacon candidates or church members. Only the three highest vote totals shall be notified.

Section 3: Duties

In accordance with the meaning of the word and practice of the New Testament, deacons are elected servants of the church with the pastor, and, as the Holy Spirit may direct, they are to be zealous to guard the unity of the spirit within the church in the bonds of peace, and shall always perform their duties faithfully; they are to consider and make recommendations to the church in all matters pertaining to its work and progress, including overseeing the discipline of the church, and establishment and maintenance of spiritual fraternal relations with all members of the church. They shall assist the pastor in the observance of the ordinances, have general oversight of the upkeep, repair and use of property, with proper respect for the responsibilities of the corporate officers of the church and the building and grounds committee, and supervise the financial program of the church. All deacons are expected to support the work of the church and to work in harmony with the pastor. Deacons are to serve as a counsel to advise and confer with the pastor in all matters pertaining to welfare and work of the church. The body of deacons shall serve as a pulpit supply committee in the absence of the pastor. Therefore, all deacons are expected to:

- a. Be faithful in their attendance to all church services;
- b. Contact each of the church families appointed to their watch-care on a regular basis.
- c. Be involved in the nurture of existing church members, or the outreach of new church members.

They shall arrange for regular meetings and such committees as are necessary to the discharge of their duties. The Pastor, or the Chairman of the deacons, may call the deacons into special Sessions whenever need for such arises. Blood relatives may not serve on the active deacon body at the same time. No blood relative of a staff member may serve on the church staff at the same time.

The Chairman of the deacon body shall appoint active deacons to chair the Finance committee, the Counting committee, Building and Grounds committee and the Personnel committee.

An ordained deacon not serving on the active body may serve in any positions reserved for deacons, such as the Baptismal committee and the Lord's Supper committee, if approved by the church. It shall be the responsibility of the deacon appointed to the Lord's Supper committee and his wife to care for the vessels, secure the elements, prepare the table, and gather up the vessels following the observance of the Lord's Supper. Likewise, the deacon and his wife shall be responsible for care and supervision of dressing rooms, baptismal robes and provide assistance to candidates for baptism.

A majority vote shall determine any question. The Chairman may vote in case of a tie. If the chairman abstains, the vote dies. No member shall be permitted to speak more than once on a subject until each member has had the opportunity to speak on the same subject. The Chairman of the deacons shall provide for review of the Constitution and By-laws annually.

Section 4: Organization Of Deacon Body:

The offices of the deacon body shall consist of: Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary. The body of deacons shall meet on the first Monday after the first Sunday of each month or as the majority may vote. Newly elected deacons shall take office the first meeting in July. The Chairman or Vice Chairman shall preside and call for nominations from the body of deacons for the office of Chairman. To be eligible for this office the deacon must have served one year on the active body. Voting will be by secret ballot. The deacon receiving the most votes will be declared elected. The newly elected Chairman will then conduct the election for Vice Chairman and secretary following the same procedure. Newly elected deacons will not be eligible for the office of Chairman but can be eligible for election to other offices. The Chairman has responsibility to appoint deacons to serve as chairman of the following committees: Finance committee, Counting committee, Building and Grounds committee, and Personnel committee. He shall also appoint a member or members to the position of Officers of the Corporation (formerly called trustees). The duration of the meetings shall be one hour, with extension of time permissible upon approval of the body. Each meeting shall be opened with scripture and prayer. The committee quorum rule applies to the deacon body.

C. The Officers of the Corporation (Trustees)

Upon the adoption of this constitution, the church shall elect five members to serve as officers of the Corporation. These officers shall be president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and director. One officer shall rotate off each year. Each body of officers shall elect their President. The corporate officers shall execute all contracts, deeds, mortgages or other instruments when authorized to do so by the church in conference. Upon the death, or resignation, or inability to serve of any of the corporate officers, a successor shall be elected by the church in a conference called for this purpose.

D. Church Clerk

The clerk shall be elected annually upon recommendation of whatever committee is established to recommend the church officers. It shall be the clerk's responsibility to attend or be represented at all church business meetings, to keep an accurate record of all business transactions, to prepare the annual association letter, and to see that it is properly transmitted to the associational clerk. The clerk shall maintain a current list of all officers, members of committees and messengers. The clerk shall issue letters of dismissal and receive letters of admission as authorized by the church, preserve all papers and valuable records and letters that belong to the church, and preserve a true history of the church, keeping same in the church office files. It shall be the duty of the clerk to see that an accurate roll of the church membership is kept; the dates and methods of admission and dismissal; change in name, correct mailing addresses, and other pertinent information about each member. The clerk shall keep a register of the names of members with dates of admission, dismissal, or death together with a record of baptism.

E. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be elected annually by the church. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to review and report the monthly financial statement to the church in business meeting. He will serve as the CFO corporate representative. All books, records, and accounts kept by the treasurer shall be the property of the church. The treasurer shall upon invitation meet with the deacons and shall be a member of the finance and budget committee. The church shall elect a financial secretary or other such persons as may be needed as aide to the treasurer.

F. Church Council

The primary function of the Church Council shall be to recommend to the congregation suggested objectives and church goals; to review and coordinate program plans recommended by church officers, organizations and committees; to recommend the use of leadership, calendar program time and other resources according to program priorities and to evaluate program achievements in terms of church goals and objectives. The council unless otherwise determined by the church shall have as regular members the pastor, other staff members, directors of church program organizations and the chairman of the deacons. All matters approved by the council, calling for action not already authorized, shall be recommended to the appropriate committee, or to the congregation for consideration and any resulting action concerns regarding church business.

G. Church Staff

No blood relative of a staff member may serve on the church staff at the same time.

Article X: Church Government

Section 1: Government

The government of this church shall be congregational in nature and shall be vested.

Section 2: Church Conference

A church conference shall be held on the second Sunday night of each month. In addition to regular conferences, a special conference of the church may be called at any time by the pastor and chairman of the deacons, or upon the request of any five members of the church who are regular in attendance and support, which request for special conference has been approved by the deacon body. All special conferences of the church would require at least one week's notice to the membership stating the purpose of the conference, which would be limited to the stated purpose.

Section 3: Moderator

The moderator shall be the pastor. In the absence of the pastor, the chairman of the deacon body shall preside, or in the absence of both the clerk shall call the church to order and a moderator shall be elected. All business shall be in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order unless otherwise specified in the bylaws.

Section 4: Majority

A majority shall consist of all the active members present.

Section 5: Minutes

The church clerk shall keep minutes of each business meeting and what actions were taken by the church.

Article XI: Affiliation

Section 1: Independent Body

This church is a free, autonomous, independent body; congregational in nature with authority to determine for itself in the manner set forth in this constitution the use of its property and all church policies; free of any outside control, authority or power, whether governmental or otherwise.

Section 2: Association

The church recognizes the value and mutual helpfulness in the voluntary association of churches, which are in such agreement in faith and practice as to make it possible a spirit of fellowship and good will. It is recognized that association and cooperation between such churches will influence the missionary, educational and benevolent interest of each other. The church does declare, therefore, its intention to work in mutual cooperation with other Baptist groups or Christian groups as far as conscience will allow.

Section 3: Affiliation

Upon the adoption of this constitution, this church shall be deemed to have affiliated itself with the Floyd County Baptist Association.

Section 4: Cooperation

Upon adoption of this constitution, this church shall be deemed to be in friendly cooperation with the aims and purposes of the Baptist State Convention of Georgia and of the Southern Baptist Convention as set forth in the constitutions of these autonomous bodies; and through duly elected messengers, will participate in their deliberative assemblies; and shall, as we are able, support the missionary, benevolent and educational programs of each.

Section 5: Discontinuance of Affiliation and/or Cooperation

The calling of a church conference for the purpose of voting on withdrawal from affiliation with the Floyd County Baptist Association and/or discontinuance of cooperation with the Baptist State Convention and/or the Southern Baptist Convention will require that a written notice be sent to each resident member of the church stating the purpose and time of said conference. Action to withdraw must be carried by a vote of three fourths of the voting membership to be valid.

Article XII: Adoption and Amendments

Section 1: Constitution Adoption

The constitution shall be considered adopted and in immediate effect if and when two thirds of the voting membership at the business meeting at which the vote is taken shall vote in favor of same. This vote shall be taken not less than thirty days after formal presentation of the constitution to the church, and notice of such meeting in which the vote is to be taken shall be given at least one week in advance.

Section 2: Constitution Amendment

This constitution may be amended, altered or repealed by a two-thirds vote of the voting membership at any regular business meeting of the church; provided, however, that such amendment, alteration or repeal shall have been given to the clerk in writing; and the proposed change shall have been presented to the church at least thirty days prior to the time the vote is taken.

Article XIII: Church Discipline

Section 1: Counsel

It shall be the basic purpose of the Sherwood Forest Baptist Church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The pastor, other members of the church staff, and deacons are available for counsel and guidance. Redemption, rather than punishment, should be the guideline which governs the attitude of one member toward another.

Section 2: Membership Dismissal

Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, every reasonable measure will be taken by the pastor and by the deacons to resolve the problem according to scripture (Matt.18:15-17). All such proceedings shall be encompassed with a spirit of Christian kindness and love. But, if after efforts of the pastor and by the deacons, it is still found that the welfare of the church will best be served by the exclusion of the member, the church may take this action by two-thirds vote of the voting membership at a meeting called for this purpose; and the church may proceed to declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the church. This action would not exclude such a person from worship or fellowship with the church.

Section 3: Recommendation of Church Activity Exclusion

Under most cases, exclusion from membership shall not include exclusion from attendance at worship services and regular fellowship meetings. However, under extreme circumstances, the pastor and deacons may recommend to the church that such an individual or individuals should be excluded from all activities of the church. Such a recommendation would require a separate vote of two-thirds of members present at a meeting called for this purpose.

Section 4: Membership Restoration

Any person whose membership has been terminated for a condition which has made it necessary for the church to exclude him or her may, upon his request, be restored to membership by two-thirds majority vote of the church upon evidence of his repentance and reformation.

Bylaws of the Sherwood Forest Baptist Church

Article I: Meetings

The Church shall hold regular meetings in accordance to Article VII, Section 1 of the constitution.

Article II: Other Church Officers

Section 1: Officer Election

All church officers subject to annual election shall be elected during the month of July.

Section 2: Nominating Committee Nominations

The nominating committee shall consist of one representative from each of the following: body of deacons, Sunday school, discipleship training department, Women's Missionary Union, brotherhood and music. The head of each organization shall recommend to the pastor one person to serve on the nominating committee. After each person has been contacted as to their willingness to serve, the pastor shall then present them to the church for election.

Article III: Duties of Church Officers

Section 1: Financial Secretary

The Financial Secretary shall receive the empty offering envelopes after the money has been counted by the proper persons; and from these, the financial secretary shall give each contributor individual credit as provided in the record system approved by the church. This person shall keep the envelopes for references as the church directs. The financial secretary shall keep records of the, receipts from envelopes, plate or loose, and miscellaneous or special offerings. The financial secretary shall also be responsible for preparing and distributing regular statements to all contributing members as the church directs. The financial secretary may also assume temporary or total duties of the church treasurer if the need arises.

Section 2: Sunday Superintendent

The superintendent shall be acquainted with the best methods of religious education and endeavor to adopt them in this school. It shall be this person's duty to counsel weekly or monthly with teachers and officers through officers' and teachers' meetings, giving advice and receiving suggestions from co-workers. The superintendent shall see that a full and accurate report is made of the work of the Sunday school in the regular business meetings of the church.

Section 3: Discipleship Director

The Discipleship Director shall be acquainted with the best methods of religious education and endeavor to adopt them in discipleship Training classes. The director shall have the responsibility to organize and plan the studies and secure teachers for all discipleship classes. It will be the responsibility of the director to see that a full and accurate report is given at the regular business meetings of the church.

Section 4: President of the Brotherhood

The President of the Brotherhood shall promote the work of the brotherhood as outlined by the Brotherhood Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, seeking to enlist the men of the church in an active program for Christ. He shall see that a full and accurate report is given at the regular business meetings of the church.

Section 5: President of the Women's Missionary Union

The President of the Women's Missionary Union shall seek to enlist all the girls and women of the church in a program of missionary training, giving, and activity according to plans promoted by the Women's Missionary Union, Auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention. She shall see that a full and accurate report is given at the regular business meetings of the church.

Section 6: Minister of Music

The Minister of music shall be elected by the church for an indefinite period of time and shall serve until the relationship is terminated by either the minister of music or by the church. Either shall give the other thirty-day notice before terminating the relationship. Upon the vacancy of the position of minister of music, a committee shall be recommended to the church for election of a minister of music by the Body of Deacons with the cooperation of the pastor, will seek a suitable person for this position and shall make recommendation to the church in conference who shall elect such person in the same manner as set forth for the election of the pastor. The Body of Deacons shall be kept informed of the committee's progress. The Minister of music shall be charged with the responsibility of providing worshipful music for all services and departments of the church and shall have the general direction of the music. He or she is to cooperate with the pastor and other leaders in the selection of suitable music and the devising of appropriate musical programs for all occasions where such services are needed. The Minister of music shall be In charge of a music education program for our young people in order to insure training for our future church work. He or She must notify the pastor or chairman of the deacons if he or she is to be absent from the church services or practice and to furnish a suitable replacement. The Minister of music shall also be responsible to the church for the nomination of a church pianist and organist and the associates.

Section 7: Pianist and/or Organist

The Pianist and organist shall be responsible for all church music and cooperate with the minister of music and other officers in providing the proper church music for worship and other church organizations. In his or her absence, he/she shall notify the minister of music. The minister of music is not to be absent himself at the same time as the pastor except under extreme emergencies. The Pianist and/or Organist shall play for all public services and shall assist the music director in a suitable program of music for the church.

Article IV: Committees

Section 1: Standing Committees

The church shall elect such standing committees as may be deemed necessary to carry out the various phases of the program of the church efficiently and effectively. In any event, the church shall have at all times the following standing committees: nominating, budget and finance, building and grounds, missions, ordinances, library, benevolence, ushers, flowers, music, membership, and any additional committees deemed necessary for the proper function of the church. In the event that any committee is non-functional, the deacon body will have responsibility to oversee this area. The chairman of each committee shall be invited to participate and/or report on committee activities at each monthly church council meeting.

Section 2: Temporary Committees

The church may elect at any time committees to perform temporary functions.

Section 3: Committee Quorum

All committees shall be governed by a quorum. A quorum shall be one hundred percent of the members for a committee consisting of the four members or less; a quorum for a committee consisting of five or more members shall be sixty percent.

Section 4: Committee Minutes

All committees shall keep accurate minutes of meetings in order that proper transmission of information can be made to the church in conference. A summary of the efforts of such committees shall be filed with the church clerk on a timely basis.

Section 5: Committee Chairman

Each committee shall elect a chairman for the purpose of reporting committee activities to the church body.

Article V: Duties of Committees

Section 1: Benevolence Committee

It shall be the duty of this committee to seek out needy families; to encourage the church membership to give liberally of canned goods, etc., to help these needy families, especially at the Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons; to sort out, arrange, and deliver Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets. This committee shall, at all times of the year, be alert for opportunities to help the needy of our church membership and of our community and to encourage all members of the church to participate during periods of crisis. It will also be responsible for sending flowers to the bereaved church members' immediate family.

Section 2: Budget and Finance Committee

This committee shall consist of five persons, nominated by the body of deacons and presented to the church for election. The chairman of this committee shall be an active deacon. This committee shall meet at regular intervals to consider the financial condition of the church and shall prepare annually a proposed budget including local expenses, education, missions, salaries, and benevolences; and shall submit the same to the church in regular conference at least two months prior to the beginning of the fiscal year or budget year. In preparing the budget, the committee shall confer with the head of each organization of the church to determine the needs of these organizations. Upon adoption, it becomes the duty of the budget and finance committee, together with such others as may be needed, to provide members with envelopes for contributions and be responsible for the care and deposit of all funds contributed to the church in a designated bank.

Section 3: Building and Grounds Committee

It shall be the duty of this committee to give attention to and study the condition and state of repair and appearance of all buildings and grounds, making such reports and improvements authorized by the church, and included in the church budget. All matters of major repair or improvement and items of equipment shall be submitted to the church in conference for its recommendations. This committee shall be responsible for the work of the custodian and all other persons employed in the capacity of caring for the building and grounds. The chairman of the committee shall be elected by the church after nomination by the deacons. The chairman and two persons selected by the chairman will make up the committee. The chairman of the committee shall be responsible for purchasing custodial supplies. It shall be the duty of this committee to handle requests from groups not affiliated with the church who want to use the church facilities by bringing such requests to the church in conference along with the committee's recommendation. The chairman of this committee in consultation with the pastor, the chairman of the finance committee, and the chairman of the deacons, shall be authorized to make decisions of emergency expenditures.

Section 4: Fellowship Committee

It shall be the purpose of this committee to plan, oversee, and implement all church wide activities for the church. It should encourage all ministries of the church to plan activities within their scope of ministry; i.e., youth, children, seniors, and music. They shall seek to plan at least one church-wide activity per month, such as cookouts, Sunday fellowships, socials, etc. It is their goal to create an atmosphere that compliments a "fellowship of love." They will choose their own chairman.

Section 5: Worship Committee

It shall be the purpose of this committee, along with the worship minister, to plan, oversee, and implement the overall direction of the music and worship of the church. They shall be responsible for planning special worship services within and without the church, planning worship for all revivals, and ongoing improvement of the overall music ministry of the church. They, along with the music minister, shall seek to provide choirs, ensembles, soloists, and groups for all age groups within the church. The music minister shall be the chairman.

Section 6: Prayer Committee

It shall be the purpose of this committee to plan, oversee and implement the prayer ministry of the church. They shall seek to involve all persons of the church in effectual fervent praying. They shall seek to plan seasons of prayer such as: cottage, prayer meetings, special prayer services, and other prayer meetings as needed. They shall provide a prayer group to meet with the pastor thirty minutes before each service for the purpose of covering the pastor, music minister, choir and all aspects of the service in prayer. They shall seek other ways to make prayer a driving force of Sherwood Forest Baptist Church. They shall elect their own chairman.

Section 7: Mission Committee

It shall be the purpose of this committee to plan, oversee, and implement the mission strategy of the church. They shall seek to involve the whole church in giving to and going on missions. They shall have oversight of all things pertaining locally, state, nationally and world. It will be their responsibility to work with other ministries to raise support for the Lottie Moon Christmas offering and Annie Armstrong. Along with the pastor, they will help plan and execute all mission trips at home and abroad. They should seek to involve the whole church in mission activity. They shall choose their own chairman.

Section 8: Discipleship Committee

It shall be the purpose of this committee along with the education minister to plan, oversee, and implement an overall strategy for Sunday school and Discipleship training. This committee shall seek to provide and equip the saints for service. They shall seek to provide studies designed to grow the church in grace and truth. They will have the responsibility of providing and equipping new teachers, creating new Sunday school and discipleship classes that are conservative in theology and sound doctrine. They shall have the general oversight and responsibility of growing the church numerically through the outreach ministry of the church. The chairman will be the education minister of the church.

Section 9: Ministry Committee

It shall be the purpose of the ministry committee to plan, oversee, and implement ministries that encourage, buildup, and promote, the church. They will seek to involve all church members in one or more ministries. They shall seek to find and implement new ministries realizing that all church members have a place of service as well as a place to be served. They shall provide a current and active list of all ministries within the church and encourage others to serve their fellow brethren. They shall choose their chairman.

Section 10: Library Committee

The church shall annually elect the church library services director as deemed necessary by the church whose duties are To maintain supervision of the church library and with the aid of this committee to work in close cooperation with the librarian to promote and strengthen the for ministry of the library; to see that adequate space and equipment are provided the library; to recommend and oversee library policies, rules and regulations; to help select and train staff personnel; and to encourage the spiritual growth of the congregation through the use of its resources.

Section 11: Music Committee

It shall be the duty of this committee to encourage the best music program possible, as sung by the choir and congregation, to enhance the church programs and worship services. This committee shall be responsible for the proper maintenance and repair of all musical instruments in the church. It shall be responsible for locating instruments in appropriate locations in the church facilities and the purchase of new instruments when authorized to do so by the church. The music director shall serve as a member of this committee. This committee shall work in close coordination with the music director and the pastor at all times.

Section 12: Nominating Committee

All church committee members shall be selected by the nominating committee and elected by the church unless otherwise indicated. The nominating committee shall consist of one representative from each of the following: the body of deacons, Sunday school, discipleship training, Women's Missionary Union, brotherhood and the music department. The heads of each department shall recommend to the Pastor one person to serve on the nominating committee, after each person has been contacted as to their willingness to serve, the Pastor shall then present them to the church for election. This committee shall be responsible for the nomination of the following: Church Clerk, Church Treasurer, Sunday School Director, Church Training Director, WMU Director, Chairman of the Ushers, Church Librarian, Church Hostess, Outreach Director, Bus Minister, Youth Director, Executive Committee Representative, Pianist, Sound Equipment, Media Center Director, Merry Makers, Decorating Committee, Homecoming Committee, and Recreation Committee. Upon their election, these persons shall become ex officio members of the basic committee to assist in the selection of workers for their organizations. The report of the nominating committee shall be suggestive to the church, and church members shall have the privilege of nominations from the floor.

Section 13: Ordinances Committee

It shall be the duty of this committee to assist the pastor with the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. It shall assist candidates for baptism in the preparation for and execution of this ordinance. It also will prepare the equipment and meal for the observance of the Lord's Supper and place them in the sanctuary prior to the worship service. This committee shall consist of the deacon appointed to be in charge of Baptism and his wife; the deacon appointed to be in charge of the Lord's Supper and his wife.

Section 14: Outreach Committee

This committee shall study and promote the ways and means of reaching people in the name of Christ and the church. Its efforts should reach non-active members as well as non-members and the lost. It shall promote active outreach efforts through Sunday school classes and a church wide visitation. It shall work in close coordination with the pastor. It shall be responsible for acquiring any materials and for training others as necessary.

Section 15: Pulpit Committee

This committee shall be responsible for securing a prospective pastor upon the discharge or resignation of the present pastor. It is to keep the job description of the pastor current, updating it as the need arises. Upon the election of a pastor, the work of this committee will be completed. However, members of this committee will function as a pastor-church relations committee for a minimum of six months.

Section 16: Usher Committee

It shall be the duty of this committee to seat worshippers and take up the offerings at all of the worship and revival services; to heartily welcome all worshippers as they come to and leave the services; to see that everyone has a bulletin; and to look after the comfort of the congregation with regard to heat, light, ventilation, noise etc. This committee will direct parking as needed.

Section 17: Youth Activities Committee

It shall be the duty of this committee to work closely with the youth minister to promote the various activities of the church designed to meet the needs of the local young people. It will be this committee's responsibility to implement a strong visitation program for the youth of our church. It shall work closely with the Floyd County Baptist Association and the Georgia State Convention to provide opportunities for youth evangelism conferences and other activities provided by these agencies.

Section 18: Personnel Committee

The personnel committee shall be charged with the responsibility of obtaining and releasing all employees who are paid for their services (excluding the pastor, associate pastor, music director and children's minister); these including secretaries, janitor, nursery workers, etc. This committee shall be a deacon committee consisting of three members. The chairman shall be on the active deacon body. This committee shall keep under constant advisement the matter of salaries and make such recommendations as it deems wise for action by the deacons who shall make the necessary recommendations to the Finance Committee of the church. It shall be the task of this committee to take under consideration the work load of all above stated employees and their ability to fulfill their responsibilities. The relationship between any employee and the church shall be terminated only through this committee upon the recommendation of such department heads, standing committees or other committees which shall be involved and with consultation with the pastor.

Section 19: Counting Committee

The counting committee is composed of six men to form three counting teams of two men. The chairman of the committee is an active deacon appointed by the chairman of the deacon body. The Sunday school offering and envelopes shall be placed in an envelope that can be sealed and placed in the safe for the committee. The offering taken up in the morning service is taken by the chairman and placed in the safe with the Sunday school offering. The counting team of two men will count the offering sometime after the morning service and before the evening service. The offering is placed in a bag and sealed and taken to the bank and deposited into the night deposit. The evening offering is taken up and placed in an envelope and placed in the safe for counting and deposit the following Sunday. Should the evening offering be \$500.00 or more, it shall be deposited in the night deposit that Sunday evening. All offerings shall be counted by the counting committee. All offering envelopes (morning and evening) shall be sealed and retained for the counting committee.

Section 20: Other Committees

Other standing or special committees may be set up as deemed necessary by the vote of the church in conference. Their duties will be as directed by the church.

Article VI: Church Funding

The church shall operate primarily from funds received as tithes and offerings of its members. The borrowing of money from institutions or individuals, at the prevailing rate of interest, may be necessary at times. Fund raising benefits shall be limited to activities within this church family. Other fund raising techniques, such as the holding of real estate property for speculative purposes, and the owning and renting of property for monetary gain, shall be prohibited. Certain enterprises in which the church might engage solely as a community service should be so identified with proceeds being used for the stated purpose of the event.

Article VII: Financial Policy

Section 1:

Regular expenditures such as salaries, utilities, literature shall be paid as authorized by the finance committee and as noted on budgeted line items.

Section 2:

All other purchases shall require a purchase order number. Purchase order numbers will be issued by the church secretary. The purchase orders will be issued in triplicate form; one copy kept in the office, one copy for purchase, and one copy filed for the finance committee. The finance committee shall review all purchase orders monthly. All purchase orders issued will be charged to the correct line item in the church budget. All vendors where the church has charge accounts shall be notified by letter regarding the church purchase order (PO) system. No items may be purchased without a purchase order and a PO number.

Section 3:

Church Staff members are authorized to spend up to \$250.00 for necessary supplies without the prior approval of the finance committee.

Section 4:

All other expenditures exceeding \$250.00 up to \$500.00 except budgeted items shall require authorization of the finance committee.

Section 5:

Any expenditure exceeding \$500.00, except budgeted line items, shall require approval of the church.

Section 6: Credit Cards.

The church will maintain one active credit card account with 3 cards. One card will be issued for the pastor's use, and 2 cards will be stored in the church office by the financial secretary. The stored cards will be issued as needed for use by other pastoral staff and by church members on a list approved by the Budget and Finance Committee.

All credit card purchases will require itemized receipts to be turned over to the church secretary. Receipts will be reviewed monthly by the finance committee. All receipts will require proper budgeted line item identification. Purchases made without proper procedure being followed will result in loss of credit card and purchaser being held responsible for the purchase. No credit card purchases may exceed budgeted line item amount without church approval.

Section 7:

Detailed financial reports shall be printed and given out at the regular monthly conference and deacon's meeting. All records and accounts shall remain the property of Sherwood Baptist Church and all records and accounts shall be subject to regular (normal) accounting procedures and may be audited as recommended by the deacon body and finance committee. All tithes and offerings shall be confidential. These records shall only be accessed by persons nominated and approved by the finance committee and the deacon body.

Article VIII: Adoption and Amendments

Section 1: Bylaw Adoption

These bylaws shall be considered adopted and in immediate effect if and when a majority of the members present at the business meeting at which vote is taken shall vote in favor of same. This vote shall be taken not less than thirty days after formal presentation of the bylaws to the church.

Section 2: Bylaw Amendment

These bylaws may be amended, altered or repealed by a two-thirds vote of the members voting at any regular business meeting of the church provided, however, that notice and proposal of such amendment, alteration or repeal must be given in writing at the preceding regular business meeting of the church.

Article IX: Rules of Order

The church shall use Robert's Rules of Order in the conduct of its parliamentary procedures.

Article X: Validate

Section 1: Constitution and Bylaws Adoption

The adoption by the church of this constitution and bylaws shall repeal all previously adopted rules.

Section 2: Constitution and Bylaws Record Keeping

A copy of this constitution and bylaws shall be kept by the clerk at all times among church records and another copy shall be kept in the church office; and all amendments to or revision thereof shall be prepared by the clerk and attached to copies of the constitution and bylaws and made available to the church members, generally upon request.