

# The Constitution of Providence Park Baptist Church

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Adopted Wednesday, July 2, 1997

The Constitution  
of  
Providence Park Baptist Church

**The Preamble**

Whereas, we, a body of believers in Jesus Christ, organized for the purpose of spreading the Gospel of the LORD our GOD and Savior as taught by Jesus of Nazareth, His Son, and the teachings and the practices of the Holy Bible, deem it advisable to have definite laws to direct us, such that our lives may be conducted with decency and in an orderly fashion, that the principles of this faith be preserved and secured, and that this body may be governed in an orderly manner that is consistent with the principles of the Holy Bible, and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of this church, and the freedom of action of this body with respect to its relations with other churches of the same faith, do declare and establish the following Constitution.

**Article I - Name**

The name of this institution shall be **Providence Park Baptist Church, Richmond, Virginia.**

**Article II - Purpose**

The purpose of this church shall be to promote the advancement of the Kingdom of GOD as set forth in the Holy Bible and taught by Jesus of Nazareth. It shall seek to attain this end through maintenance of public worship of GOD, preaching of the Gospel, consistent Christian living by its members, personal evangelism, missionary endeavor, and Christian education.

**Article III - Covenant Statement**

As a body of believers in the LORD our GOD through Jesus of Nazareth, whom we declare is the Christ, we engage to abide by the "Church Covenant" accepted by Baptist Churches, which reads:

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of GOD to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour; and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the 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.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge and holiness; to give it a place in our affections, prayers and services above every organization of human origin; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrine; to contribute cheerfully and regularly, as GOD has prospered us, toward its expenses, for the support of a faithful and

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evangelical ministry among us, the relief of the poor and the spread of the Gospel throughout the world. In case of difference of opinion in the church, we will strive to avoid a contentious spirit, and if we cannot unanimously agree, we will cheerfully recognize the right of the majority to govern.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotion; to study diligently the word of GOD; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintance; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be kind and just to those in our employ, and faithful in the service we promise others; endeavoring in the purity of heart and good will towards all persons to exemplify and commend our holy faith.

We further engage to watch over, to pray for, to exhort and stir up each other unto every good word and work; to guard each other's reputation, not needlessly exposing the infirmities of others; to participate in each other's joys, and with tender sympathy bear one another's burdens and sorrows; to cultivate Christian courtesy; to be slow to give or take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, being mindful of the rules of the Savior in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, to secure it without delay; and through life, amid evil report, and good report, to seek to live to the glory of GOD, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

When we remove from this place, we engage as soon as possible to unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of GOD'S WORD.

As a supplement to the previous covenant, and as an affirmation of church membership, we pledge loyalty and support for each other by reciting periodically the following, "The Congregational Covenant of Providence Park Baptist Church":

By the providence of Almighty GOD we have assembled ourselves for worship in the Spirit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We affirm our unity in that Spirit and acknowledge our congregational relationship and individual responsibility for one another.

We pledge our support to each other as members of this congregation and participants in the baptized body of believers who receive Jesus Christ as Lord of life and victor over death.

We share this worship as a witness to our promise of prayerful concern for this communion. We covenant with one another that in daily duties and persistent practice we will seek the well-being of the other one for whom Christ also died. We willingly bind ourselves to the obligations of continuing fellowship.

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Expecting to move toward the fulfillment of our association that we may know each other even as we have been known by our Heavenly Father,

We await the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever,  
Amen.

**Article IV - Denominational Affiliation**

This church, by a majority vote of its body and under the direction of the Spirit of GOD, may affiliate, or decline affiliation, with any national Christian association or convention, such as the Lott Carey Foreign Mission Convention, the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Incorporated, the National Sunday School and Baptist Training Union Congress, the Baptist General Association and Goodwill Conventions, and the Tuckahoe Association.

**Article V - Membership**

**Section 1 - Admission of Members**

Our members shall be those who subscribe to the Church Covenant, the Church Constitution, and accept the faith and practice to which this church subscribes. Membership is secured by the recommendation of the Pastor and the Diaconate to the church for confirmation at a regular business meeting, or at any regular assembly, of the congregation under the following qualifications:

- a. *Baptism*: A person, who confesses Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ, Lord, and Savior, and adopts the views of faith and the principles of this church, appearing before the Pastor and the Diaconate to be recommended by them for confirmation by the church, upon immersion in water, is received into the fellowship of this church as a regular member. Baptism by immersion at a stated service, or otherwise, shall be in the presence of representatives of the Diaconate, or other qualified officers or members of this church.
- b. *Letter*: A person, who is in accord with the views of faith and the principles of this church, may be received by *Letter of Dismissal* from another church, provided s/he is in good and regular standing there. Such persons, who adhere to the principles expressed in the Church Covenant and have been previously received into a particular branch or denomination of the Universal Church, may be received into regular membership upon recommendation of the Pastor and the Diaconate, and confirmation by the church.
- c. *Christian Experience*: A person of worthy character, who is, or has been, a member of a Baptist Church, and for sufficient reason cannot present a *Letter of Dismissal* from that church, but is in accord with the views of

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faith and principles expressed in the Church Covenant and the Constitution of this church, may be received into membership upon recommendation of the Pastor and the Diaconate, and the confirmation by the church.

d. *Restoration:*

1. *in General:* Any person giving evidence of having been a member of this church, who is considered by this church, or who seeks out of good conscience, may request to be restored by the recommendation of the Pastor and the Diaconate, or by the Executive Board, and the confirmation of the church.
2. *from Discipline:* Excluded members, or others under church discipline (as stated in Article VI. Section 2. a., b., and c.), may be restored to membership and full participation, as the church may specify, only after confession of their errors to the church at the termination of their period of discipline, and after having given satisfactory evidence of repentance. Such restoration shall occur through a recommendation of the Pastor and the Executive Board to the church, followed by the confirmation of the church body. After said deliberations and decisions, the Hand of Fellowship will be given, immediately or as soon as possible, at a church assembly.

- e. *Pastoral Affiliation:* The Pastor and the Pastor's spouse, including their children (provided they are members of the Universal Church), shall at the installation service of the Pastor become *Active Members* of this church, and maintain such status, provided they fulfill the commitments of membership, until the resignation of the Pastor, or the dissolution of the Pastor-Church relationship. After resignation, or dissolution, of the Pastor-Church relationship, they may continue as members of this church by request of the body, or they must join as regular members, if they intend to remain affiliated.

Section 2 - The Hand of Fellowship

It shall be the traditional custom, but not necessary for membership, of the church that all new members, having been confirmed by the church, shall receive the Hand of Fellowship at the next observance of the Lord's Supper. The Hand of Fellowship symbolizes the extension of full rights, privileges, and responsibilities of Church membership to the new converts, whereby they may freely attend and participate in all church activities, with the exception of the meetings of the Executive Board, and the

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executive sessions of business, or committee, meetings, in which case submission of the reason(s) for attendance, and decision by the respective organization, must be made.

Section 3 - Termination or Dismissal of Members

- a. *By Letter:* Any member who desires to unite with some, other church shall be granted a Letter of Dismissal upon recommendation of the Pastor and the Diaconate, or the confirmation of the church. The name of the church to which membership is requested, regardless of denomination, must be specified in a written request, and the letter of dismissal shall be sent to the Pastor, or the Clerk, of that church.
  
- b. *By Exclusion:* Any member who becomes an offense to the church by reason of immorality, conduct unbecoming a Christian, or persistent ignoring of the covenant vows and obligations, shall be excluded from membership, and the Hand of Fellowship shall be withdrawn from the member, after due notice and opportunity for a hearing before the church, or its designated representatives, and after faithful efforts that have been made to bring the member to repentance do not result in the repentance of that member before the church, or its designated representatives. All requests for exclusion from membership, or any actions pertaining thereto, shall first be considered by the Pastor and the Diaconate, or the Pastor and the Executive Board, which shall make recommendations to the church.
  
- c. *By Deletion:*
  - (i) Any member who could have, but has not, attended the services of the church with regularity, or contributed financially to the church, for twelve (12) months, and who has not made an acceptable response, when contacted by the Diaconate, shall be terminated, without any action of the church, from active membership. The member's name shall be placed upon a list of inactive members. Upon demonstration of renewed interest in the church, as evidenced by spiritual and financial support, said member shall be restored to full membership without any action of the church.
  
  - (ii) Any member who has been inactive for two (2) years, and efforts to activate said member have failed, shall be dropped or erased, without any action of the church, from the church roll. This matter of final adjustment shall be handled by the Pastor, the Diaconate, and the Executive Board.
  
  - (iii) Any member who is inactive, or under the discipline of

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Silence, shall have no voice or vote in the business meetings  
of the church, or its auxiliaries, or boards.

- d. *By Death*: The name of a deceased member shall be automatically eradicated from the church roll.

**Section 4 - Kinds of Membership**

To keep the membership roll as accurate as possible, this church shall have three rolls: *Active Members*; *Inactive*, including silenced, *Members*; and *Non-resident Members*.

- a. *Active Member*: One whose life exemplifies the basic principles of the Bible (i. e., the Ten Commandments, the Great Commandments) and supports the Church Covenant, as demonstrated in regular attendance at the church services, regular contribution to the financial support of the church, and spiritual maturity (e. g., Gal. 5:16-26).
- b. *Inactive Member*: One whose life is inconsistent with the principles of the Bible and the Church Covenant, as reflected in unfaithful attendance at the church services, uncommitted, or lack of, contribution to the financial support of the church, and spiritual triflingness. Silenced members shall be regarded as temporarily inactive members due to confirmed unfaithfulness in regards to their commitments to the church and GOD.
- c. *Non-Resident Member*: One who does not live in the vicinity of Richmond, but resides in another city or state, and desires to continue membership in this church, as demonstrated in exemplification of the basic principles of the Bible (i. e., the Ten Commandments, the Great Commandments), support of the Church Covenant, regular attendance at the services of this church, when circumstances permit, but at the services of some other church, when absent from this church, regular contribution to the financial support of the church, and spiritual maturity (e. g., Gal. 5:16-26).

**Article VI - Church Discipline**

**Section 1 - The Circumstances regarding Discipline**

Discipline shall be administered to any person(s) who becomes a reproach to the church by her/his acts, who willingly incites discord among the membership, or who publicly or privately is abusive, or disrespectful in behavior or language, to another member, the Pastor, or an officer, when the same abuse, or open disrespect and disregard for the authority of the church, can be substantiated. Such discipline shall be one of the following kinds, or a combination of any of the following, and shall be determined by the majority vote of the church at the recommendation of the Pastor and the Executive Board, or by either directly to the church. Failure to abide by the action and voice of the

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church in regards to the discipline that is determined shall result in exclusion from the membership, including dropping of the name of the person who is disciplined from the roll and withdrawing of the Hand of Fellowship. Restoration from discipline shall follow the provisions stated in Article V, Section 1. d. 2., provided all the specified requirements are met.

**Section 2 - Kinds of Discipline**

- a. *Exclusion*: A person may be excluded from membership in the church, and denied the Hand of Fellowship under the provisions stated in Article V. Section 3. b.
- b. *Divesting*: A person may be removed, immediately and indefinitely, from any or all offices or positions and organizations of the church under the conditions stated in Article VI. Section 1. Such a person shall maintain membership, provided financial obligations, regular attendance, and immediate compliance with the stipulated discipline are met.
- c. *Silencing*: A person may be placed on the *Inactive Members* roll by the church, for a period of one to five years, as determined by the church, under the provisions stated in Article V. Section 4. b. Such a person shall have no voice or vote in any church affairs or business.

**Article VII - Officers**

**Section 1 - The Categories of Officers**

There shall be two categories of officers in the church: *Scriptural*, and *Non-Scriptural*.

- a. *Scriptural Officers*: The officers who are indicated by the Scripture shall be the Pastor and the Diaconate.
- b. *Non-Scriptural Officers*: The officers who are not indicated by the Scripture but permitted according to the principles of Scripture, and who are dictated by continuous, or circumstantial, need shall be: the Trustees; the Treasurer (and Assistant Treasurer, if desired); the Church Clerk (and Assistant Clerk, if desired); the Superintendent of Church School (and Assistant Superintendent, if desired); the Director of Missions; the Director of Christian Education; the Director(s) of Music; the Director of Youth Ministries (if desired, needed, and feasible); and the Chairpersons of the special auxiliaries, committees, or organizations of the church, such as, the usher boards, the various fellowship groups, etc.

**Section 2 - The General Responsibilities of Officers**

- a. *General Qualification*: Every officer of the church must be a mature Christian, whose life testifies to the same, and able to perform the duties



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of the specific office.

b. *Specific Duties*: Every officer is expected, and required, to:

- (i) attend regularly the meetings of its organization and the church business meetings;
- (ii) work with the other officers at all times;
- (iii) prepare written reports for business;
- (iv) cooperate in obtaining news for church papers;
- (v) keep a copy of the By-Laws for the respective group that includes the duties of the officers, and make sure that a copy of these By-Laws is placed in the custody of the Clerk, and the Pastor;
- (vi) attend regularly *spiritually-nurturing activities* of the church, such as, prayer meetings, Bible study, Church School, Church Worship, association meetings, conventions, etc.

Section 3 - Election & Term of Office

The officers, excluding the Pastor, shall be appointed by the Pastor, or selected by vote of their respective organizations, and approved by the church during one of its official meetings. The term of service for each officer, with the exception of the Pastor, shall be two to three years. Upon completion of a term an officer may be nominated and elected to serve succeeding terms, provided the officer has upheld the general qualification for all officers, and fulfilled the duties for all officers, and the respective office.

Section 4 - Dismissal of Officers

- a. *Non-Pastoral*: Failure of an officer to meet the obligations of the respective office, as specified in Article VII. Section 2., shall result in confrontation of the negligent officer by the Pastor, or a selected representative of the Executive Board, in effort to provide an opportunity for the officer to account for the dereliction, and to remedy the deficiency in performance. If no reconciliation is reached, or if said dereliction continues, and upon the decision of the Pastor and the Executive Board, the officer shall be officially dismissed from the office held, and notified by letter, or in person.
- b. *Pastor*: Failure of the Pastor to meet the obligations of the respective office shall result in confrontation of the Pastor by the Chair of the

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Diaconate, or a representative selected therefrom, regarding the specified act of negligence or dereliction. The Pastor shall be provided an opportunity to account for the dereliction, and to remedy the deficiency in performance. If no reconciliation is reached, or if said dereliction continues, a meeting shall be held with the Pastor and the Diaconate. If no reconciliation is reached, or if said dereliction continues, the Diaconate shall call a meeting of the members in good standing, giving notice of said meeting two Sundays prior to the meeting, and stating the object of the meeting. At said meeting, the matter of dereliction shall be presented to, and discussed by, the body as a grievance against the Pastor. Based upon the vote of the majority of the members present, provided that this majority constitutes at least two-thirds of the total membership in good standing, a recommendation for dissolution of the relationship shall be made to the Pastor.

Section 5 - The Executive Board

The Executive Board, which may also be called the “Official Board”, will automatically consist of the officers specified, or permitted, in Article VII. Section 1., with the addition of the Clerk, the Treasurer, and the Church School Superintendent. It may elect its own chairperson at the approval of the church and the Pastor, who may preside at the Executive Board meetings, and church meetings, when the church has no Pastor. It shall handle matters affecting the church as whole, such as, concerns brought by the Pastor, formation of a Pulpit Committee in the absence of a Pastor, etc.

Section 6 - The Pastor

- a. *Qualifications*: In addition to Article VII. Section 2., the Pastor:
- (i) should have an undergraduate degree from an accredited college and a Master of Divinity degree from an accredited seminary;
  - (ii) should reflect a background with extensive and intensive church and community activity;
  - (iii) should demonstrate sound communication skills, that is, good grammar, articulate reading skills, logical and cogent writing, ability to comprehend/systematize new ideas;
  - (iv) should employ sound or critical biblical methods in interpreting the Bible and be able to demonstrate such in deducing and applying biblical principles;
  - (v) should reflect creativity in ministry, that is, innovative thinking, relevant ideas, realistic visions, ability to develop

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programs/projects;

- (vi) should be personable, that is, display ability to relate to a variety of persons, and be knowledgeable of problem-solving skills;
- (vii) should be knowledgeable of parliamentary procedure, committee processing, and effective management skills;
- (viii) should be a family-person and demonstrate strong spiritual character and integrity;
- (ix) should be familiar with all areas of church worship, that is, music, litanies/liturgies, seasonal decoration of the sanctuary, etc.;
- (x) should demonstrate neatness and decorum in all areas of that one's person and dealings.

b. *Tasks*: The Pastor shall undertake the following assignments:

- (i) Bible teaching, that is, instruction of the congregation in biblical studies, and facilitation of knowledge of the principles of the Israelite ideology or faith;
- (ii) Interpretation of the reality of GOD, that is, explanation of where, how, and when GOD is manifested in the life of the congregation, and the resulting demands;
- (iii) Assistance of the members of the congregation in understanding how GOD is working in their lives, individually, that is, enabling of them in articulating/perceiving the divine presence;
- (iv) Assistance of the members of the congregation in discovering their respective GOD-given skills or talents, and the corresponding tasks implicated by these gifts;
- (v) Guidance of the congregation in positive and productive living, that is, implementation of the principles/standards of the Israelite ideology or faith;
- (vi) Leadership in worship or service of GOD, ritually and socially.

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c. *Duties*: The Pastor shall assume the following responsibilities:

- (i) Performance all of the Scriptural duties of this office [2 Peter 1:12-21; 5:1-11; 1 & 2 Timothy; Titus], and nurture of the spiritual growth of the congregation and the staff in a reciprocal ministry that is worthy of fellowship in Christ, having freedom of the pulpit under the guidance of the Holy Spirit;
- (ii) Provision of ministerial leadership for the committees and boards of the church, acting as the Executive Director, or the Administrator, of all affairs of the church, and thereby teaching and carrying out the goal of a strong GOD-centered educational program through the Board of Christian Education;
- (iii) Acting as an *ex officio* member of every committee or board of the church, but having and exercising as necessary authority to call special meetings, to table decisions that are not in accordance with Article XII, giving explanation in such cases and referring such cases to the Executive Board, in a timely manner, and with some recommendation(s) for final determination, and to recommend the appointment, and dismissal, of officers to the Executive Board, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit;
- (iv) Performance of pastoral visitation and counsel with those in need;
- (v) Provision of leadership for public witness and representation of the church at outside church and community events that will extend the reach of the church in its larger ministry for GOD;
- (vi) Performance of such other duties in connection with the work of the church as shall be delegated by vote of the church, and accepted by the Pastor;
- (vii) Creation, or organization, and recognition of auxiliaries that are necessary for the implementation of the mission, and the ministry, of the church.

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- d. *Dissolution of Relationship*: In addition to Article VII. Section 3.b. the question of relationship between the Pastor and the church shall be considered at any time by the church upon the presentation of the Pastor's resignation. Said resignation shall be presented in writing to the Diaconate, which shall call a meeting of the members in good standing in the congregation, giving notice of the meeting two Sundays prior to the meeting, and stating the object of the meeting. At said meeting, the Diaconate shall put before the body the Pastor's letter of resignation, and the members in good standing shall vote to accept, or not to accept, said letter.

Section 7 - The Diaconate Board

- a. *Definition*: The Diaconate Board shall consist of what heretofore has been called the Board of Deacons and the Board of Deaconesses, and, upon ratification of this Constitution, shall function and serve as one board, composed of husband-and-wife teams, and of individuals of outstanding spiritual maturity and Christian character.
- b. *Special Classification*: Deacons may be classified as *Conditionally Active* in cases when:
- (i) they are not fully functional due to age, health, job, or residence;
  - (ii) they are not fully functional due to physical, or mental, disabilities.
- c. *Specific Qualifications* [cf. Acts 6:1-6; 6:8-7:60; 8:26; 1 Timothy 3:1-10; 1 Corinthians 12-14; Galatians 3:27-28]: In addition to Article VII. Section 2. the Deacons shall:
- (i) demonstrate spiritual maturity;
  - (ii) have Christian purpose;
  - (iii) exemplify spiritual integrity;
  - (iv) lead a Christian family life;
  - (v) be honest in speech, temperate in living, and faithful in stewardship of possessions.
- d. *Duties* [cf. Acts 6:1-6; 6:8-7:60; 8:26; 1 Timothy 3:1-10; 1 Corinthians 12-14; Galatians 3:27-28; also Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 20]: In

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addition to Article VII. Section 2.b. the Deacons shall:

- (i) assist the Pastor in monitoring and facilitating the spiritual life of the church, in promoting, proclaiming, and practicing the Gospel, in administering the Lord's Supper and Baptism, in praying for the work of the church, and in taking responsibility for the leadership of the public meetings of the church in the absence of the Pastor;
- (ii) catechize the candidates for baptism and membership into the fellowship of the church;
- (iii) assist in providing instruction in biblical studies through participation, including teaching, in Church School, Vacation Bible School, and other occasions of nurture and edification of the body;
- (iv) encourage, and sponsor, training opportunities that enhance the *ritual*, and the *social*, worship of the church;
- (v) care for the church through visitation of the members in times of need, sickness, and death as well as in times of spiritual wellness;
- (vi) maintain, and monitor, the membership roll of the church;
- (vii) maintain daily a special time of prayer for the church, and to attend, and take active part in, the *ritual* worship of the church, for example, the prayer services, the morning, and the evening, services, the special services, etc.

Section 8 - The Board of Trustees

a. *Qualifications*: In addition to Article VII. Section 2.a. the Trustees shall exemplify:

- (i) sound business sense and accounting skills;
- (ii) compassion in administration and stewardship;
- (iii) integrity in inter-personal dealings.

b. *Duties*: In addition to Article VII. Section 2.b. the Trustees shall:

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- (i) manage the finances of the church, depositing, withdrawing, and investing church funds as authorized by the church;
- (ii) advise the church regarding appropriate and efficient ways of handling its funds or properties;
- (iii) keep an accurate account of all money deposited in the church bank accounts, and make, or authorize, payments of all obligations incurred by the church by means of checks drawn on the church accounts;
- (iv) keep a summary of the financial standing of the church before the members through regular, periodic reports, and provide regular, periodic reports to the Executive Board;
- (v) provide personal, financial statements to all members, annually;
- (vi) oversee the property of the church, attending to its maintenance, and arranging its needed repairs and additions;
- (vii) represent the church in all legal matters;
- (viii) inform the Pastor of the financial, and the legal, status of the church in a regular and timely manner (i. e., monthly, quarterly, etc.).

Section 9 - The Church Clerk

The Church Clerk shall be employed as the Secretary of the church, and the Administrative Assistant of the Pastor.

- a. *Qualifications:* In addition to Article VII. Section 2. a. the Church Clerk should:
  - (i) be able to write proficiently;
  - (ii) have good business habits;
  - (iii) be interested in the work of the LORD, and willing to go beyond the requirements of the work to be done, doing such as unto the LORD.

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b. *Duties:* In addition to Article VII. Section 2.b. the Church Clerk shall:

- (i) keep accurate and up-to-date records of all business proceedings of the church, information of historical interests pertaining to the church, and other such papers as directed by the church (e. g., copies of the Church Constitution, the various By-Laws of the church organizations, the certificates of Baptism, and of marriage) or the Pastor, or that may be legally required;
- (ii) handle all church correspondence, signing and maintaining records of such;
- (iii) print the bulletins for worship, in cooperation with the Pastor;
- (iv) handle, and post timely notice of, announcements of church activities or meetings, and of activities of interests to the church;
- (v) handle the scheduling for use of the church by members and non-members;
- (vi) assist the Treasurer in maintaining accurate and up-to-date records of the finances of the church;
- (vii) assist the Pastor in handling the daily affairs of the church office.

Section 10 - The Treasurer

a. *Qualifications:* The qualifications of the Treasurer shall be the same as those specified in Article VII. Section 2. and Article VII. Section 8.a.

b. *Duties:* The Treasurer shall:

- (i) keep an accurate account of all money received by the church, and deposited in church accounts, maintaining accurate and up-to-date records of the finances of the church;
- (ii) pay out money upon proper authorization as established by the church, signing checks and acting as an official signatory of the church;



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- (iii) provide reports of the financial status of the church to the Pastor and the Trustees in a regular and timely manner (i. e., weekly, monthly, quarterly, etc.).

Section 11 - The Other Officers

The remaining officers of the church that are listed in Article VII. Section 1.b. shall comply with the responsibilities stated in Article VII. Section 2. and the following additional specifications. These officers are: the Superintendent of Church School (and Assistant Superintendent, if desired); the Director of Missions; the Director of Christian Education; the Director(s) of Music; the Director of Youth Ministries (if desired, needed, and feasible); and the Chairpersons of the special auxiliaries, committees, or organizations of the church, such as, the usher boards, the various fellowship groups, the various choirs, etc. It is to be noted that, of the previously stated officers, the following may be employed on staff by the church: the Director of Missions; the Director of Christian Education; the Director(s) of Music; the Director of Youth Ministries.

a. *Qualifications:*

- (i) A willingness to serve faithfully;
- (ii) A sincere love for the WORD of GOD;
- (iii) Completion of the necessary training for assumption, and execution, of the respective responsibilities.

b. *Duties:*

(i) *of the Superintendent of Church School:*

- (1) Administration of the church school, acting as a liaison between the Pastor and the church school, and thereby reporting to the Pastor concerns, needs, and accomplishments of the church school;
- (2) Supervision of the church school staff in planning, implementing, and evaluating their work;
- (3) Interpretation and promotion of biblical study to the congregation.

(ii) *of the Assistant Superintendent of Church School:*

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- (1) Assistance of the Superintendent of church school, handling tasks that are assigned;
- (2) Presiding and acting in the absence of the Superintendent of church school;
- (3) Promotion of biblical study.

(iii) *of the Director of Missions:*

- (1) Administration of the evangelism (i. e., the missionary efforts and social outreach) of the church, and thereby creating, coordinating, developing, and implementing relevant projects for the needs of the members of the church, and the neighbors of the immediate, and greater, environment of the church;
- (2) Supervision of the Missionary Society, and/or the Evangelism Committee, of the church.

(iv) *of the Director of Christian Education:*

- (1) Development and implementation of the educational thrust of the church in conjunction with the Pastor;
- (2) Evaluation of the work of the various auxiliaries of the Board of Christian Education in conjunction with the Pastor;
- (3) Chairing of the Board of Christian Education;
- (4) Education of the leaders or officers of the various auxiliaries of the Board of Christian Education through workshops, teaching/training sessions, etc.;
- (5) Acting as a *resource person* in Christian Education for the various auxiliaries of the church;

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- (6) Oversight of the programs and/or projects of the various auxiliaries of the church;
- (7) Participation, and assistance, in worship as needed and specified by the Pastor.

*(v) of the Director of Music:*

- (1) Assistance of the Pastor in selection of the necessary musical selections for the Orders of Service, and in interpretation of the biblical significance of the musical selections and the role of music, and the choir, in worship;
- (2) Rehearsal, and direction, of the respective choral group.

*(vi) of the Director of Youth Ministries:*

- (1) Assistance of the Pastor in coordination and mobilization of the youths of the church in the fellowship of the LORD and the Master;
- (2) Development, and supervision, of programs or projects that address the needs of, and are targeted toward the spiritual growth and maturation of, the youths within, and outside of, the church.

*(vii) of the Chair of the Board of Christian Education:*

- (1) In the absence of a Director of Christian Education, the Chair will assume responsibility for as many as possible of the duties of the Director of Christian Education, listed in Article VII. Section 11.b.iv.;
- (2) In the presence of a Director of Christian Education, the Chair will assume responsibility for the following duties of the Director of Christian Education, listed in

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Article VII. Section 11.b.iv.: (1); (2); and (3).

(viii) *of the Chairs of the Special Auxiliaries:*

- (1) Assistance of the Pastor in furtherance of the mission, and the ministry, of the church, acting as liaisons between the Pastor and their respective organizations;
- (2) Development of By-Laws that specify the tasks of their respective organizations, and supervision of these tasks, in accordance with the Bible and the Church Constitution, as needed;
- (3) Representation of their respective organizations at the meetings of the Board of Christian Education.

Section 12 - The Board of Christian Education

The Board of Christian Education shall consist of the chairpersons, or representatives, of all church organizations, especially the Superintendent, and the Assistant Superintendent, of church school, the Director of Christian Education (if one is employed), and the Pastor.

- a. *Qualifications:* The qualifications of the Board of Christian Education shall be the same as those specified in Article VII. Section 2.a.
- b. *Duties:* In addition to the duties stated in Article VII. Section 2.b., the Board of Christian Education shall assume the following responsibilities:
  - (i) Cooperation with the Pastor, and the Director of Christian Education (if one is employed), in interpretation and establishment of the religious education, and the spiritual directions, of the church.
  - (ii) Provision of the biblical basis for all the activities of the church;
  - (iii) Establishment of ways and means for instruction of the various organizations of the church as to the biblical significance of their respective tasks;
  - (iv) Development, evaluation, approval, and coordination of

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the activities, programs, and projects of the various organizations, and the church;

- (v) Recommendation of those activities, programs, or projects that have been approved to the Pastor and the Diaconate for final approval;
- (vi) Assistance in handling of technical difficulties that may arise within the various organizations of the church.

**Article VIII - The Church Business Meetings & Quorum**

Section 1 - A Quorum

At all meetings the Pastor, or the presiding officer, shall be given power to declare a quorum for the transaction of church business to be twenty-four (24) members in good standing, provided said quorum is present at least thirty (30) minutes after the stated time of the meeting. Should a quorum not be reached in the allotted time, the meeting shall be cancelled at the discretion of the Pastor, or the presiding officer.

Section 2 - The Regular Meetings

The regular church meetings shall be held bi-annually, for example, in January and July. They shall be publicly announced for two (2) consecutive Sundays prior to the meeting date.

Section 3 - The Annual Meetings

The annual meeting for election of church officers shall be in December/January. The annual meeting for adoption of the budget and approval of the calendar for the year, and of final reports, shall be in June/July.

Section 4 - The Special "Called" Meetings

Special meetings shall be called by the Pastor, or the presiding officer, in a duly constituted church assembly (e. g., worship, etc.) or meeting. The notice, and the purpose, of the meeting should be stated.

Section 5 - The Presiding Officer

By virtue of office, the Pastor shall be the presiding officer. At the discretion of the Pastor (see Article VII. Section 5), or in the absence of a Pastor (see Article VII. Section 5; Section 7.d.(i)), a presiding officer may be elected to chair the church meetings.

Section 6 - The Order of Business and Rules

a. *The Order of Business*: The agenda for the regular meetings shall be:

- (i) Call to Order (including circulation of the Attendance Sheet);

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- (ii) Hymn;
- (iii) Scripture;
- (iv) Prayer;
- (v) Reading of the Minutes;
- (vi) Finance Report;
- (vii) Old Business
- (viii) New Business (including reports from the Board of Christian Education, of Deacons, of Trustees, and of other church auxiliaries as necessary);
- (ix) Announcements;
- (x) Concerns from the Floor;
- (xi) Concerns from the Pastor;
- (xii) Meditation & Adjournment.

b. *The Rules*: The church business shall:

- (i) follow the *Parliamentary Procedure* as set forth in *The Robert's Rules of Order*;
- (ii) follow the *Biblical Procedure* as set forth from interpretation, and implementation of the principles of love, of the Holy Bible;
- (iii) consist of the submission in writing of all recommendations, reports, and resolutions coming from the Boards, the organizations, and the Treasurer.

Section 7 - The Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the church shall be from the first of January to the thirty-first of December.

**Article IX - Finance**

Section 1 - Pledges & Offerings

The financial support of the church shall be raised by pledges and offerings that are freely given by the members. Envelopes will be issued at the beginning of the calendar year to all active members with the exception of those exempted by the church. Offerings for the current expenses of the church are to be determined by the individual as so blessed by GOD, and shall be given weekly unless so arranged with the Trustees, not to exceed monthly intervals. Each member is urged and expected to support all offering-raising campaigns of the church.

Section 2 - Guidelines for Offering-giving

- a. *The Purpose for Offerings*: The offerings should be given:

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- (i) as an expression of love or self-commitment to the LORD;
- (ii) as an expression of thanks to the LORD;
- (iii) as support of the ministry of the LORD.

b. *The Rationale for Offerings*: Whatever is offered to the LORD should:

- (i) reflect the condition of the faith of the giver, that is, it must be *given to the LORD* and *given so that the person may be accepted*;
- (ii) be given, that is, freely shared with expectation of nothing in return as an expression of self-directed toward the benefit of another;
- (iii) be of one's own resources as a sacrifice and thereby reflect the integrity/character of the giver's life in relation to the LORD;
- (iv) reflect *prayerful sobriety*, that is, it should be within one's means or considerate of one's economic welfare and spiritual maturity.

c. *Tithing*: In accordance with the Scripture (Leviticus 1-7; 19:5; 22:26-30; 27; Numbers 18:21-24; Deuteronomy 12:6, 7, 17, 19; 14:22-29; 26:1-15; 1 Samuel 15:22; 1 Chronicles 29:10-16; Nehemiah 10:37-38; 12:44; 13:5, 10, 12; Psalm 50; Amos 5:21-24; Micah 6:1-8; Malachi 3:6-12; Matthew 16:24-28 [= Mark 8:34-37 = Luke 9:23-27]; 21:10-17; 25:14-30; Mark 11:11, 15-19; Luke 15:11-24; 19:45-48; John 3:16; Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-15; Galatians 2:20) a tithe shall be defined as a tenth of the total of one's skills in service, income, property, and time. Only those members who consistently give a tithe from their gross assets, in some documented manner that is verified with the Trustees, shall be exempt from other campaigns for offerings.

#### **Article X - Amendments**

This Constitution may be amended by the consent of three-fourths (3/4) of the members present and voting at any church meeting, provided notice of the intended change has been posted on the bulletin board for one (1) month, and notice of the meeting to consider the change shall have been given from the pulpit two (2) consecutive Sundays, prior to the meeting.

#### **Article XI - Ratification of the Constitution**

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This Constitution shall be ratified at the time of its reading at the church meeting specified for the purpose of its reading, and upon ratification it shall be notarized.

**Article XII - The Authority**

The Holy Bible is the supreme authority and guide for this church, whose interpretation and application is mandatory for all policy and practice of this congregation.

**First Draft - June 28, 1995 by Jerome Clayton Ross, Pastor  
Second Draft - August 21, 1995 by Jerome Clayton Ross, Pastor  
Third Draft - December 6, 1995 by Jerome Clayton Ross, Pastor  
Fourth Draft - December 9, 1995 by Jerome Clayton Ross, Pastor  
Fifth Draft - May 20, 1996 by Jerome Clayton Ross, Pastor  
Sixth Draft - June 1, 1996 by Jerome Clayton Ross, Pastor**