

THE JEFFERSON BAPTIST CHURCH
CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

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PREAMBLE

Reposing our faith wholly in the Lord Jesus Christ our salvation, believing in the teachings and practices of the Baptists and in those distinctive principles for which they have ever stood, namely:

1. The preeminence of Christ as our Divine Lord and Master.
2. The supreme authority of the Bible and its sufficiency as our only rule of faith and practice.
3. The right of private interpretation and the competency of the individual soul in direct approach to God.
4. The absolute separation of Church and State.
5. A regenerate Church membership.
6. The symbolic ordinance of believer's baptism in obedience to the command of Christ.
7. The complete independence of the local church and its interdependence in associated fellowship with other Baptist Churches.
8. The solemn obligation of majority rule, guaranteeing equal rights to all and special privileges to none
9. The spiritual unity of all believers. And:
10. A world-wide program of missionary fervor and evangelism in obedience to the final command of Jesus.

We, therefore, band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ and adopt for our government, plan of worship and service, the following articles:

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CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I

Name

The name of this organization shall be The Jefferson Baptist Church.

ARTICLE II

Purpose

The purpose of this church shall be to promote the interests of the Kingdom of God in accordance with the teachings of Christ by maintaining public services for the worship of God, by teaching and preaching the Gospel and by promoting an active Church program of local and international missionary endeavor.

ARTICLE III

Affiliation

This Church shall be affiliated with the Ten Mile Baptist Association, the American Baptist Churches of Pennsylvania and Delaware, and the American Baptist Churches of the United States of America.

ARTICLE IV Membership

Section I. Qualifications.

Any person may become a member of this church upon; recommendation of the Pastor or deacons, who shall receive their application, examine them according to their beliefs and present their findings to the Church for a vote. They shall qualify:

- a) Upon confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord followed by baptism by immersion, or
- b) By letter from some other Baptist Church of like faith and order or another church of like faith and order, or
- c) Upon statement of Christian experience and satisfactory proof or testimony as to their baptism at an age of accountability by immersion or some other mode deemed by the believer to be an appropriate expression of their new life in Jesus Christ, or
- d) Upon application for restoration and approval by the Church, if they have been dropped or discontinued, and will give evidence by their lives that they are living in accordance with Christ's teachings.

Section II. Duties of members.

In order that persons applying for Church membership may be informed as to the duties of the members, they shall have the Affirmation of Faith presented to them by the pastor or deacons and shall agree to it in its letter and spirit.

Members in good standing will strive to keep their obligations according to the affirmation of faith.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Expressive of our faith and purpose, we make the following affirmation:

Gathered here in the fellowship of this church, in the presence of one another and in the sight of Almighty God, we subscribe to the following affirmation of our faith and intent:

We reaffirm our allegiance to Jesus Christ and to his Church;

We receive the scriptures as an all-sufficient basis of doctrine and practice;

We would seek for ourselves and others the fullness of salvation found in Jesus Christ, namely, life lived creatively in meaningful relation to God;

We would seek continually the forgiveness of our sins, and the renewal of our spiritual life through the indwelling of The Holy Spirit;

We would follow Christ more completely in our day by day experience;

We would seek to understand more fully His claims on us in our dealings with other people, of whatever race or culture;

We would dedicate our lives and material resources to making effective the teachings of Christ in all areas of life, here and throughout the world, beginning with the Christian nurture of our own families;

We would discover, through faithful worship and in fellowship at the Lord's Table, the meaning of Christian discipleship;

We would promise that, when we remove from this Church, we will unite with another Christian Church, where we may continue to live in the spirit of this affirmation;

We would pray always that the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts may be acceptable in the sight of The Lord, our strength and our redeemer.

AMEN

Section III. Joining the Church.

- a) A Baptismal Certificate shall be presented to each person baptized by the Church.
- b) The Hand of Fellowship shall be extended to each new member and shall be accompanied by a Certificate of Membership and a copy of this Constitution.
- c) Each person shall be enrolled as a member after his approval by the Church and his baptism.

Section IV. Dismissal of Members

- a) Death
- b) By a letter of dismissal granted by recommendation of the pastor or Diaconate and the vote of the Church, in order to unite with some other Church.
- c) By absenting them self from the Church or not corresponding with the Church for a period of one year and by recommendation of the Diaconate.
- d) By exclusion where the person is known to be guilty of gross immoral conduct and where efforts at restoration fail. No person may be excluded without every effort to bring about a reform or renewed interest.
- e) By erasure when a member requests that his or her name be erased and the Diaconate recommends the erasure.

Section V.

Persons who have been removed from membership may become active members on the resumption of an active interest in the Church and the recommendation of the Pastor or the Diaconate.

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ARTICLE V Officers

Section I.

The officers of this church shall be a Moderator; a Vice-Moderator; a Diaconate of ten members, preferably but not necessarily, of five men and five women; a Board of Trustees of five members; a Clerk; an Assistant Clerk; a Church Treasurer; an Assistant Church Treasurer; a Missionary Treasurer; a Board of Ushers; Auditors; and a permanent council chosen from and by the Diaconate.

Section II. Duties of the Pastor.

The Pastor shall perform these duties common to the office of the pastor: visit the sick, make contact with the spiritually needy, invite members into the Church, and be the leader of the Church, providing direction and support at all necessary meetings The pastor must be a believer in

and a preacher of the Gospel and the basic Baptist doctrines and shall cooperate with the local work of the denomination and the American Baptist Churches of Pennsylvania and Delaware and the American Baptist Church of U.S.A. The pastor shall be hired for an indefinite period of time by written contract which may include benefits approved by the membership of the church.

Section III. Duties of the officers.

- a) The Moderator shall preside at all the church business meetings except as provision may be made for temporary presiding officers at given meetings; attend Diaconate meetings, facilitating the election of chair at the first yearly meeting; appoint the Nominating Committee, and attend those meetings; appoint the Budget Committee and participate in those meetings.
- b) The Vice-Moderator shall serve to fill in for the Moderator, if needed
- c) The Diaconate shall be the Pastor's advisory board, shall assist in visiting the sick, seeking the lost and bringing them into the Kingdom of God, in the administration of baptism and the Lord's Supper, as a Pulpit Supply Committee, and to secure Church employees at such salary as is provided by the Church.
- d) The Board of Trustees shall hold in trust all property belonging to the Church and shall take all necessary measures for its protection, management and upkeep; it shall secure a janitor when so instructed by the Church at such salary as is authorized by the Church, shall provide a written contract, and shall be in charge of the janitor's services; and shall perform such duties as are imposed upon it by the Church and by the State of Pennsylvania.
- e) The Clerk shall keep accurate minutes of the business proceedings of the church including the reception and dismissal of members, deaths, baptisms; keep a complete roll of the members of the Church and their addresses; receive and issue letters relative to the Church membership and dismissal; assist in preparing denominational reports; and carry on the official correspondence of the Church and issue Certificates of Baptism and Membership.
- f) The Church Treasurer shall be the treasurer of all money contributed for the general expenses of the Church; present an itemized report of receipts and disbursements showing the actual financial condition of the Church at the quarterly and annual meetings of the Church; shall provide offering envelopes when requested; and shall keep account of each contributor, showing pledges made and contributions received through the envelope system.
- g) The Missionary Treasurer shall serve to assist the Mission Committee in such acts as, including but not exclusive to, receive the money intended for missionary purposes and disburse it as authorized by the Church; and keep account of special offerings for missions and a record of each contributor showing pledges made and contributions received.
- h) The Board of Ushers shall be composed of up to ten (10) ushers, including a chair. Ushers will be responsible for collecting all offerings of the church.
- i) The two auditors shall examine the accounts of the Church Treasurer, the Missionary Treasurer, and the Designated Needs Fund yearly and make a report at the July business meeting. Every two (2) years, a certified financial external review shall be performed and a report presented at the July business meeting.

ARTICLE VI Amendments

This constitution may be amended or altered at any quarterly or regular-called meeting by a vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting, provided that a month's notice in writing of such an amendment or alteration shall have been given and announcement made of such amendment or alteration from the pulpit on the two Sundays preceding the meeting.

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BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I

Church Meetings

Section I.

The Church year shall begin on January 1 and shall close on December 31

Section II.

The quarterly meetings of the church for the conducting of regular business shall be held in January, April, July and October except as otherwise arranged by permission of the Church. A quorum for this meeting shall be twelve (12). Notification of meeting dates shall be placed in the Church newsletter and/or bulletin.

Section III.

The annual meeting shall be the first quarterly meeting of the year, in January, at which time yearly reports shall be heard from the Diaconate, the Trustees, and the two Treasurers.

Section IV.

The Church shall meet each Sunday for the public worship of God and shall hold one evening service during the week for prayer and Bible study except as otherwise provided by the Church.

Section V.

The Ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed at the morning service of the Sunday following the regularly scheduled quarterly meetings, or on the first Sunday morning service of each quarter, and as otherwise provided by the Church.

Section VI.

Regular called meetings of the Church shall be called by the Pastor, Moderator, the Vice-Moderator in the absence of the Moderator, the Diaconate, or by a petition read from the pulpit by the Clerk, drawn up and presented by twelve (12) active members of the Church. Notice must be given on the two Sundays preceding the meeting and the purpose for which the meeting is called. The meeting shall not be conducted without a quorum of twelve (12).

Section VII.

Special called meetings may be held for consideration of such matters as approving application for membership, acting on Church letters and routine matters of Church procedure such as Association dues, letters, and so forth, provided such matters are truly normal and routine. Such meetings must be called in Sunday Morning Worship by the Moderator or Vice-Moderator. Quorum for this meeting shall be twelve (12).

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ARTICLE II

Calling a Pastor

Section I.

When it is necessary to call a pastor, the Church shall select a Pulpit Committee of five or more members. It shall be the duty of this committee to secure the names of men who may be eligible for the pastorate, investigate the qualifications of these men as to their education, previous service and satisfaction in other pastorates, whether licensed or ordained, personal character and preaching ability, and when a suitable man is found, the committee shall recommend him to the Church for consideration and hearing, if possible.

Section II.

The call of a pastor shall come before the Church at a regularly called meeting. A vote of at least three-fourths of the members present and voting shall be necessary for a call and a quorum of twelve (12) shall be necessary for a vote. One candidate shall be heard and a vote taken before another can be considered.

Section III.

The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period of time; the salary shall be fixed at the time of the call and may be changed by the vote of the Church at any regular business meeting. The Pastor's compensation shall be reviewed annually by the Diaconate prior to the October Business Meeting.

Section IV.

A Pastor's term of office may be ended by sixty (60) days' notification on the part of the Pastor or the Church. A vote on such action shall be taken at a regularly called meeting of the Church. A vote of three-fourths of the members present and voting shall make the decision and a quorum of twelve (12) shall be necessary for a vote.

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ARTICLE III Elections

Section I.

The annual election of officers shall be held at the October meeting of the Church. A quorum shall be composed of at least twelve (12) members of the Church.

Section II.

A nominating committee of five shall be appointed by the Moderator at the quarterly meeting in July. They shall present to the Church at the October business meeting a list of nominations of at least one person for each office to be vacated at the close of the Church year. The Moderator shall be nominated by the Diaconate.

Section III.

The terms of the Moderator and the Vice-Moderator shall be two (2) years. No person shall be re-elected to the office of Moderator or Vice-Moderator until at least one year shall have elapsed from the close of their previous term, unless such person is serving an unexpired term of another Moderator or Vice-Moderator.

ARTICLE IV Diaconate

Section I.

The number of the Diaconate elected to serve the Church shall be ten, preferably but not necessarily five men and five women. Four shall be elected each year to serve a term of three years, two men and two women being elected each year excepting for the third year, when one man and one woman shall be elected. No person shall be re-elected to the office of deacon until at least one year shall have elapsed from the close of their previous term on the Diaconate, unless such person is serving an unexpired term of another deacon.

Section II.

The Diaconate shall organize each year with a chair and secretary. The Diaconate shall meet as required to fulfill its duties and its meetings shall be called by its chair.

Section III.

The Diaconate shall choose two of its members to serve with the pastor on the Permanent Council of the Association.

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**ARTICLE V
Trustees**

Section I.

There shall be five Trustees; they shall serve a three year term, two being elected each year, excepting for the third year when one is elected.

Section II.

The Board of Trustees shall be required to organize each year with a chair and secretary; it shall meet as required to maintain its duties and to keep an up-to-date check on the condition of the Church and its property, and shall be in charge of the use of the Church building with power to limit and regulate its use for other than Church affairs.

**ARTICLE VI
Standing Committees**

Section I.

A budget Committee shall be appointed by the Moderator at least by October and shall draw up a proposed budget for presentation to the Church at the Annual Meeting. It shall be composed of the Treasurer, two Trustees, and two persons from the Diaconate who shall have the power of requesting any member of the Church who may be in a position of special service or reference to serve with them.

Section II.

A Music Committee shall be selected by the Nominating Committee; it shall include the organist and/or pianists, and if desired, one other person from the Church. It shall have charge of providing special music for the Church, and shall be an advisory committee to work with the pastor for the furtherance of an adequate musical program for the Church.

Section III

The Decorating Committee shall be two people, selected by the Nominating Committee; they shall have charge of providing and arranging flowers for church services and special holiday decorations.

Section IV

The Mission Committee shall consist of three (3) or more people appointed by the Moderator, one of whom shall serve as chair, and one of whom shall serve as Missionary Treasurer. The committee will coordinate fundraising and trips and keep a mission emphasis before the church.

Section V

The Christian Education Board shall be selected by the Nominating Committee

Section VI

The Welcome Committee shall be selected by the Nominating Committee

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ARTICLE VII Failing in Office

Any officer who fails in his duties or who is inactive in his office for a period of three consecutive months without reasonable excuse may be removed by action of the Church by majority vote at any regular Church meeting. Any office vacated by reason of removal by death or otherwise may be filled by election at any regular called meeting.

ARTICLE VIII Appeal

Any appeal to the Church to re-examine a decision of the Church or its Boards may be made at any Regular Called Meeting; The Appeal shall be handed to the Moderator, Vice-Moderator or Clerk, in writing, at least two week in advance of the meeting. Appeal shall be read to the Meeting by the Clerk, unless it be a personal matter to the Clerk; then the Moderator shall read it. The one appealing must be present and shall be allowed to state his own case and be examined by the Church. This decision of the Church shall be final.

ARTICLE IX Licensing and Ordaining

Any member giving evidence of a call to preach, after preaching in the hearing of the Church, may be licensed to preach at any regular meeting by a three-fourths vote of the members present and voting. And, conforming to the Associational procedure, the Church may, upon request of such a preacher, make application to the Permanent Council of the Association for ordination examination and approval of the other Churches.

ARTICLE X Amendments

Amendments to the By-Laws shall be governed by the same procedure as amendments to the Constitution.

ARTICLE XI Rules of Order

Except as otherwise specified, Robert's Rules of Order shall be the standard rule of procedure for all business meetings of this Church. And a simple majority shall be required for decision except as otherwise provided.

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