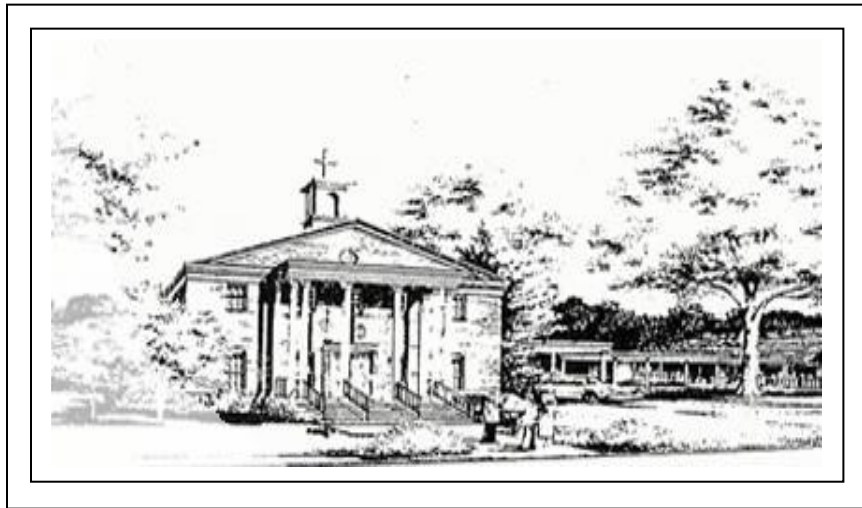


Constitution and By-Laws



Pleasant Grove Baptist Church
10005 Lake Wheeler Road
Fuquay-Varina, North Carolina 27526

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“All things should be done decently and in order.”
(I Corinthians 14:40)

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CONTENTS

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE	1
ARTICLE I – Name	1
ARTICLE II – Purpose	1
ARTICLE III – Affirmation of Faith	1
ARTICLE IV – Covenant	2
ARTICLE V – Membership	2
ARTICLE VI – Character and Organization	3
Section 1 – Church Staff	3
Section 2 – Church Management	3
Section 3 – Deacons	3
Section 4 – Corporate Officers	3
Section 5 – Councils, Committees, Commissions, Organizations, Teams, and Programs	3
Section 6 – Services, Meetings, and Conferences	3
Section 7 – Property and Funds	3
ARTICLE VII – Affiliations	4
ARTICLE VIII – Dissolution	4
ARTICLE IX – Amendments	4
ARTICLE X – Adoption	4

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I – Membership	5
Section 1 – Admission of Members	5
Section 2 – Removal from Church Membership	5
ARTICLE II – Ordinances	6
Section 1 – Baptism	6
Section 2 – The Lord’s Supper	6

ARTICLE III – Services, Meetings, and Conferences	7
Section 1 – Services and Meetings	7
Section 2 – Conferences	7
ARTICLE IV – License to Preach	8
ARTICLE V – Ordination	8
ARTICLE VI – Staff	8
Section 1 – Pastor	8
Section 2 – Other Ministerial Staff	9
Section 3 – Non-Ministerial Staff	9
ARTICLE VII – Deacons	9
ARTICLE VIII – Absentee Ballots	10
ARTICLE IX – Property	11
ARTICLE X – Finances	11
Section 1 – Budget	11
Section 2 – Tithes and Offerings	12
Section 3 – Solicitation of Funds	12
ARTICLE XI – Councils, Committees, Commissions, Teams, Organizations, and Programs	12
Section 1 – General	12
Section 2 – Members	12
Section 3 – Christian Education	12
Section 4 – Women’s Missionary Union	13
Section 5 – Brotherhood	13
Section 6 – Church Music	13
Section 7 – Committees, Councils, Commissions, and Teams	13
Section 8 – Church Council	13
Section 9 – Deacon Qualification Review Team	14
Section 10 – Recreational Outreach	14
ARTICLE XII – Operational Guidelines	14
ARTICLE XIII – Amendments	14
ARTICLE XIV – Adoption	14

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

For the purpose of preserving, propagating, and making articulate the principles of our faith, to the end that this body of believing Christians may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the accepted tenets of Southern Baptist Churches, for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of the church, and in order to set forth the relationship of this body to other Baptist bodies, we do adopt and establish this Constitution.

ARTICLE I

Name

The name of this organization shall be Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, Inc., of 10005 Lake Wheeler Road, Fuquay-Varina, North Carolina.

ARTICLE II

Purpose

This church is organized to worship God as revealed in Jesus Christ, to teach the Bible and its meaning, to train in living its message, to witness to God's love at home and around the world, and to be a family of believers devoted to each other in love and service.

ARTICLE III

Affirmation of Faith

As our affirmation of faith, we believe

- a) In one God, known to us as Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer,
- b) That God was in Jesus Christ reconciling the world unto Himself,
- c) That God through His Spirit guides and empowers our lives,
- d) The Bible is the inspired record of God's love for mankind and is our guide for salvation and life,
- e) God created us in His own image and made of one blood all nations,
- f) The Church is the body of Christ, one universal fellowship, with many local expressions,
- g) That membership is through faith in the salvation of God in Christ,
- h) That the church is commissioned by God to witness to His love throughout the world, and
- i) The church adheres to the 1963 Southern Baptist Convention Faith and Message.

ARTICLE IV

Covenant

As a fellowship of Christians, we solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. We promise through the help of God's Spirit to work together in Christian love for the growth of this church in holiness, in knowledge, and in mission; to sustain its worship and ministries by our participation, to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the financial support of this church and through it to the community and the world.

We further agree to care for each other in joys and in sorrows and to sustain each other through prayer and deeds of kindness. As individuals we promise to be Christians wherever we are, living according to the ethics of Jesus as determined through public worship, family and private devotions, and to bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

We agree to abstain from homosexual or other behaviors that are prohibited by God's word. We agree that marriage is a union between one man and one woman sanctified by, and sacred to, God. We agree that life is a sacred gift from God, begins at the moment of conception, and should not be willingly terminated without extenuating circumstances. We further agree that all individuals can be regenerated in the name of the Lord Jesus, and we will seek the regeneration of the lost at every opportunity.

Finally, we agree that if we move 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.

"Now may the God of peace – who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, and ratified an eternal covenant with his blood – may he equip you with all you need for doing his will. May he produce in you, through the power of Jesus Christ, every good thing that is pleasing to him. All glory to him forever and ever! Amen." (NLT – Hebrews 13:20-21).

ARTICLE V

Membership

The membership of the church shall consist of any person who shares with us a common dedication to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and who joins by one of the methods prescribed in the By-Laws. Members in good standing shall consist of any member who is committed to those precepts set forth in Article III (Affirmation of Faith) and Article IV (Covenant) of this Constitution.

ARTICLE VI

Character and Organization

Section 1 – Church Staff

The staff shall consist of a pastor and all other persons in the employment of the church as prescribed in the By-Laws.

Section 2 – Church Management

The management of the church shall consist of members in good standing elected by the church to manage, or participate in, the various councils, committees, commissions, teams, organizations, and programs of the church as prescribed in the By-Laws.

Section 3 – Deacons

The deacons of the church shall consist of members in good standing elected by the church as prescribed in the By-Laws.

Section 4 – Corporate Officers

The corporate officers shall consist of members in good standing and be as follows:

- a) The President of the Corporation shall be elected or reelected annually,
- b) The Vice-President of the Corporation shall be elected or reelected annually,
- c) The Secretary of the Corporation shall be elected or reelected annually,
- d) The Church Treasurer shall be the Treasurer of the Corporation, and
- e) The active deacons shall be the Board of Directors of the Corporation.

Section 5 – Councils, Committees, Commissions, Organizations, Teams, and Programs

The church may establish councils, committees, commissions, teams, organizations, and programs as needed for various purposes.

Section 6 – Services, Meetings, and Conferences

The church shall have services, meetings, and conferences as prescribed in the By-Laws.

Section 7 – Property and Funds

The church shall have authority to obtain, manage, and dispose of property and to solicit and manage funds as prescribed in the By-Laws.

ARTICLE VII

Affiliations

The church is independent in organization and authority. The church government is vested in the body of members who compose it. It is subject to no other ecclesiastical control, but it is voluntarily affiliated with those organizations outlined in the By-Laws. The measure and character of our participation in these and other organizations shall be determined by vote of the church in conference.

ARTICLE VIII

Dissolution

In the event that Pleasant Grove Baptist Church ceases to exist as a church according to our articles of incorporation then all assets will become property of the Raleigh Baptist Association.

ARTICLE IX

Amendments

This Constitution may be amended at any conference by a favorable vote of three-fourths majority of the members present, provided the proposed amendment(s) shall have been made available in writing to the membership at least four weeks prior to the conference at which the vote is to be taken.

ARTICLE X

Adoption

This Constitution shall be considered adopted and effective at any conference by a favorable vote of two-thirds majority of the members present, provided the proposed Constitution shall have been made available in writing to the membership at least four weeks prior to the conference at which it is presented for adoption.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I Membership

The membership of this church shall be composed of persons who have made a public profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, given evidence of regeneration by the Holy Spirit, who have subscribed to the Affirmation of Faith and Covenant of this church, and who have been received into membership by a majority vote of the church through one of the prescribed methods, below.

Section 1 – Admission of Members

- a) Baptism: Any person, upon satisfactory evidence of repentance toward God and a public profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, may be received as a candidate for baptism and, following baptism by immersion, shall become a member of the church.
- b) Letter: A member of another Baptist church of like faith and order shall become a member of this church by letter, or promise of a letter, of recommendation from the other Baptist church.
- c) Statement of Experience: Anyone who has been a member of another church which requires a public profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and baptism by immersion shall become a member of this church by letter, or promise of a letter, from the other church stating the prior conversion experience and baptism by immersion.
- d) Watchcare: Students or other individuals who may be in the area on a temporary basis may present themselves for membership under the Watchcare ministry. Members accepted under this ministry have all the rights and privileges of church membership except voting.

Section 2 – Removal from Church Membership

- a) Letter: A letter of transfer to unite with another Baptist church may be issued upon request to any member in good standing. Once the letter of transfer has been issued to the member, the member shall be removed from the church membership.
- b) Personal Request: A member shall be removed from the church membership upon receipt of a written request signed by the member.

- c) Membership in another church or denomination: A member shall be removed from the church membership when it is verified that the member has united with the fellowship of another denomination or another church.
- d) Participation: A member may be removed from the church membership for lack of active participation in the life of the church for a year. This provision does not apply to church members who are unable to participate due to circumstances beyond their control such as infirmity, illness, disability, etc. This provision will not be invoked unless and until a member of the ministerial staff or deacon has communicated with the member.
- e) Change of Address: A member may be removed from the church membership for failure to notify the church of a change of address that results in mail returned to the church for a year.
- f) Death: A member shall be removed from the church membership upon confirmation of his or her death.
- g) Discipline: The church, after due notice, opportunity for hearing, and every possible kindly effort to make such action unnecessary, may, upon majority vote in any church conference, revoke the membership of a member of this church for reasons it considers sufficient to warrant such action.

ARTICLE II

Ordinances

Section 1 – Baptism

A person who has received Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith; who professes Christ publicly at any worship service; and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord, shall be received for baptism. Baptism shall be by immersion in water. Baptism shall be administered by the pastor, his designee, or, in the absence of ministerial staff, an ordained individual whom the deacons shall authorize. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service.

Section 2 – The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby the body of believers, through partaking of the bread and fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His second coming. The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least quarterly and administered by the pastor and the deacons, a member of the ministerial staff and the deacons, or, in the absence of ministerial staff, an ordained individual whom the deacons shall authorize; and the deacons.

ARTICLE III

Services, Meetings, and Conferences

Section 1 – Services and Meetings

The church shall hold regular meetings and services for the purpose of worship, administering ordinances, teaching, training, and fellowship. Other meetings of the church as a whole, or of committees or other groups within the church, may be set according to the needs of the church, committees, or groups.

Section 2 – Conferences

- a) The church shall hold a conference at such times as may be necessary for the disposition of all matters relating to the operation of the church, to hear reports from the various church organizations, and to consider any matter relating to the spiritual welfare and prosperity of the church.
- b) Conferences may be held on a regular basis or may be called at any time by the pastor and chairman of deacons or upon the request of any five members of the church who are in good standing.
- c) The church shall be considered in conference at the close of each worship service for the purpose of receiving new members into the membership of the church. This conference may be moderated by the pastor, another member of the ministerial staff, chairman of deacons, or the vice chairman of deacons.
- d) Except for calling a pastor, twenty-five (25) members present at any conference shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of church matters.
- e) At least seven days written notice shall be given to the membership and to the moderator of any matter to be considered at any church conference. Provided, that when a matter arises unexpectedly of an emergency nature, the church in conference may declare the matter to be an emergency and proceed to consider it, unless some other provision of the Constitution or By-Laws require a specific notice for that matter. An emergency is defined as a sudden, unexpected occurrence creating necessity for immediate action.
- f) All motions at any church conference must be written and a copy given to the moderator before the motion is discussed and a vote taken. A copy of the motion must be given to the Church Clerk at the conclusion of the conference to ensure accurate records of all church action.
- g) All conferences, except as otherwise noted, shall be moderated by the moderator, assistant moderator, chairman of deacons, vice chairman of deacons, or pastor (in that order).

- h) If church services and activities are cancelled and there is a church conference scheduled on that date as well, the church conference will be automatically moved to the following Wednesday at 6:00 p.m.

ARTICLE IV

License to Preach

Any member of the church, who in the judgment of the church gives evidence of a call by God to the work of the ministry, may be given a license to preach the gospel provided the pastor and deacons examine the applicant and make a recommendation to the church. Three-fourths of the members present at a regular church conference must agree thereto.

ARTICLE V

Ordination

When the church wishes to ordain a member to the full gospel ministry, it shall, upon recommendation of the pastor and the deacons, who have satisfied themselves as to the candidate's fitness, request the Ordination Committee of the Raleigh Baptist Association to call an examining council according to accepted Baptist procedure to examine the candidate with respect to his views of scripture and doctrine. When this council recommends the candidate's ordination, the person shall be publicly set apart and ordained, with prayer and laying-on-of-hands, provided three-fourths of the members present at any regular church conference agree thereto.

ARTICLE VI

Staff

Section 1 – Pastor

- a) Call: The call of a pastor shall take place at a conference set for that purpose of which at least a one week written notice has been given to the membership. The election shall be upon the recommendation of a special committee recommended by the deacons and approved by the church to seek out and nominate as pastor a minister of the gospel whose Christian character and qualifications are appropriate for the office. 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. A quorum for calling a pastor in conference shall consist of twenty-five per cent of resident church members, and the election shall be by written ballot with an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present and voting necessary for an extension of a call. Should the minister recommended by the committee fail to receive a three-fourths vote, the committee shall be instructed to seek out another minister, and the conference at which the vote was taken shall be adjourned without debate. Ballots shall be counted by the current deacon officers. Once a call has been extended and accepted, the pastor shall seek membership in the church through one of the prescribed methods.

- b) Duties: The pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. The pastor shall lead the congregation, the organizations, and the church staff to perform their tasks. The pastor is the leader of pastoral ministries in the church and works with the deacons and church staff to: (1) lead the church in the achievement of its mission, (2) proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers, and (3) care for church members and other persons in the community.
- c) Covenant: There shall be a written covenant between the pastor and the church for the mutual benefit for both. Whenever the covenant is dissolved at the request of either the pastor or the church, a minimum of a thirty day notice should be given of termination of the covenant, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon, with both the pastor and the church seeking to follow the will of God through the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

Section 2 – Other Ministerial Staff

The other ministerial staff shall be called and employed as the church determines the need for such offices upon recommendation of the Personnel Team and approved by the church. Following employment, other ministerial staff shall seek membership in the church through one of the prescribed methods.

Section 3 – Non-Ministerial Staff

Non-ministerial staff members shall be employed as the church determines the need for their services. The Personnel Team shall recommend employment or termination of non-ministerial staff members to the church which will then approve or disapprove the recommendation by a majority vote in conference. Duties, benefits, and other information regarding the employment of non-ministerial staff are as prescribed in their position descriptions and the Personnel Handbook.

ARTICLE VII

Deacons

- a) **Qualifications:** A deacon must be at least twenty-one years of age and a member of the church for at least one year by the time of the scheduled election, a member in good standing, a non-ministerial staff member, and known to possess those Scriptural qualifications in Acts 6:1-6 and I Timothy 3:8-13.
- b) **Election:** Deacons shall be nominated and elected by the church in accordance with the procedures in the Deacon Guidelines. Deacons shall be nominated and elected by secret ballot by the congregation. The votes shall be counted and tabulated by the deacons.
- c) **Ordination:** Any member elected as a deacon who has not been ordained shall be ordained on a date agreed upon by the pastor, chairman of deacons, and the member to be ordained. In the event that an alternate deacon needs to be ordained he or she will be ordained when becoming an active deacon.
- d) **Term of Office:** Deacons shall serve for three years. A deacon that serves a full three year term shall not be eligible for re-election for a period of one year after the end of the full term.
- e) **Number:** There shall be a sufficient number of active deacons elected from the membership of the church to carry on the ministry of the church. In no event shall there be fewer than twelve (12) active deacons.
- f) **Duties:** Deacons shall at all times regard themselves as servants of the church. With the pastor, and as the Holy Spirit may direct, they are to deliberate and make recommendations to the church in all matters pertaining to its work and progress, including oversight of the discipline of the church and the nurturing of spiritual and fraternal relations with all members of the church. They shall assist the pastor in the observance of the ordinances and shall supervise the financial programs of the church.
- g) **Meetings:** The deacons shall have regular meetings. The pastor, or the chairman of deacons, may call additional meetings whenever the need arises. In the event the pastor and the chairman of deacons refuse to call a meeting, then seventy-five percent of the active deacons may call a meeting and elect a deacon to act as chairman for that meeting. All regular meetings of the deacons shall be open to the congregation. However, upon a motion and a favorable majority vote, the deacons may go into executive session to discuss matters of a sensitive nature.
- h) **Committees and Officers:** The deacons may appoint deacon committees and elect officers to carry out their duties as needed and in accordance with the Deacon Guidelines.

ARTICLE VIII

Absentee Ballots

- a) Availability: Absentee ballots shall be available to all members for all nominations and elections. Notice of the election shall indicate when absentee ballots will be available.
- b) Eligibility: Persons eligible to request, and vote by absentee ballot shall consist of only those members who cannot attend the scheduled election due to personal illness, physical disability, family illness (when the member is required to care for the sick person), death in the family, vacation, or when the member's job requirements preclude attendance.
- c) Requests: Requests for absentee ballots shall be made during the regular hours when the church office is open.
- d) Voting: The absentee ballot must be obtained, voted on, and returned to the church office. If a member is unable to appear at the church office because of one or more reasons set forth in (b) above, then an immediate family member or a deacon may request the ballot and deliver it to the member. The ballot shall be voted in the presence of the immediate family member or the deacon and returned to the church. Absentee ballots voted by a member unable to come to the church office must be returned to the church prior to the adjournment of the conference at which the nomination or election is held.
- e) Ballots: The church secretary shall maintain the ballots in a secure location until the day of the election when they shall be delivered to the person(s) responsible for counting all ballots.
- f) Records: The church secretary shall maintain a record of absentee voting. The election of the absentee voting, the names of the members who requested an absentee ballot, who picked up the absentee ballot, who returned the absentee ballot, and the dates the absentee ballot was picked up and returned shall be recorded. Each ballot issued shall contain a serial number thereon and that number shall also be recorded.

ARTICLE IX

Property

In order to effectively carry forward the objects and purposes set forth in the Constitution and By-Laws, the church will have full power and authority to purchase, lease and acquire by gift, devise or bequest and to hold, mortgage, convey and dispose of all kinds of property, both real and personal, provided that the title to all property shall be vested in the church. The proper corporate officers shall execute all contracts, deeds, mortgages, and other documents as authorized by the church.

ARTICLE X

Finances

Section 1 – Budget

The church shall operate under a unified budget prepared by the Stewardship Team, recommended by the deacons, and adopted by the members of the church in conference. The budget shall be submitted to the church for adoption during or prior to December of each year. Amendments to the budget or a transfer of funds from one budget item to another may be made at any time by the church in conference.

Section 2 – Tithes and Offerings

For the church to meet its budgetary requirements, church members shall be encouraged to give at least the tithe of their income and resources as they are led by the Holy Spirit.

Section 3 –Solicitation of Funds

There shall be no fund raising or solicitation of funds in the name of the church by any member, councils, committees, commissions, teams, organizations, or programs from church members, non-members, or any other source for any church ministry, project, or purpose unless and until the following:

- a) A written request for fund raising stating for what purpose the funds will be used and the method of raising the funds is submitted to the deacons.
- b) The deacons shall study the request, obtain additional information as needed, determine there are no material conflicts of interest, and either deny the request or advise the requestor that they can take the request to the church following the prescribed processes.
- c) If there is an emergency request, the pastor will consult with the Chairman of Deacons, and they will make the decision concerning the solicitation.
- d) The church in conference may approve or disapprove the request.

ARTICLE XI

Councils, Committees, Commissions, Teams, Organizations, and Programs

Section 1 – General

The church shall maintain programs of Bible teachings, Christian education, membership training, intentional recreational ministry, mission participation, and music presentation.

Section 2 – Members

All members of church councils, committees, commissions, teams, organizations, and programs that are not staff members shall be church members in good standing and elected by the church in conference. Members may be elected for terms of one, two, or three years and the terms may be staggered as the council, committee, commission, team, organization, or program may recommend. Members of subcommittees and other subgroups are selected as described in the Church Organizational Structure Handbook.

Section 3 – Christian Education

The Christian Education program shall be the basic organization for Bible teaching. Its tasks shall be to teach the biblical revelation, reach persons for Christ and church membership, perform the functions of the church within its membership, and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination. A Sunday School program shall be organized by departments and/or classes, as appropriate for all ages.

Section 4 – Women’s Missionary Union

The Women’s Missionary Union shall be a mission education, mission action, and mission support organization of the church. Its tasks shall be to teach missions, engage in mission action, support world missions through praying and giving, and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination. The Women’s Missionary Union shall have such officers and organizations as the program requires.

Section 5 – Brotherhood

The Brotherhood shall be a mission education, mission action, and mission support organization of the church. Its tasks shall be to teach missions, engage in mission action, support world missions through praying and giving, and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination. The Brotherhood shall have such officers and organizations as the program requires.

Section 6 – Church Music

The Church Music organization shall be the music education, training, and presentation organization of the church. Its tasks shall be to teach music, train persons to lead, sing and play music; provide music in the church and community; and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination. The Church Music organization shall be conducted under the direction of a worship leader.

Section 7 – Committees, Councils, Commissions, and Teams

The church may establish committees, councils, commissions, and teams as it deems necessary to carry out the various programs of the church. Provisions, types, duties, and composition of these groups are prescribed in the Church Organizational Structure Handbook.

Section 8 – Church Council

The Church Council shall be comprised of the pastor and ministerial staff, Chairman of Deacons, and Team Management. The pastor shall serve as the chairman of the Church Council. It shall be the duty of the Church Council to ensure that all our ministry teams are working in unison toward our purpose of making disciples while being disciplined. This council will publish the goals set forth from each team along with a calendar of the events scheduled by the teams.

Section 9 – Deacon Qualification Review Team

There shall be a Deacon Qualification Review Team composed of five (5) persons holding the following positions: The pastor (or his designee), Chairman of Deacons, Vice Chairman of Deacons, and two deacons at large who shall be appointed by the pastor and Chairman of Deacons. The moderator of the team shall be the pastor or, in his absence, the Chairman of Deacons. It shall be the duty of the team to examine all members nominated for deacon, to ascertain whether the nominee has the qualifications for deacon as set forth in these By-Laws; provided that those nominees who have previously served as a deacon may, at the discretion of the team, be excused from review. The team shall by majority vote recommend the nominees to the deacons, and only those nominees recommended by the team shall be eligible for election.

Section 10 – Recreational Outreach

The recreational outreach program shall be an intentional recreational ministry and the basic church organization for Christian outreach in the community. Its tasks shall be to engage and support the local community in Christian principles and prayer through the use of recreational activities. The recreational outreach program shall have such officers and organizations as the program requires.

ARTICLE XII Operational Guidelines

Church councils, committees, commissions, teams, organizations, and programs may propose to the church for adoption or amendment written operational guidelines including, but not limited to, policies, procedures, manuals, etc., as needed.

ARTICLE XIII Amendments

These By-Laws may be amended at any church conference by a favorable vote of two-thirds majority of the members present, provided the proposed amendment(s) shall have been made available in writing to the membership at least four weeks prior to the conference at which the vote is to be taken.

ARTICLE XIV Adoption

These By-Laws shall be considered adopted and effective at a business meeting for that purpose by a favorable vote of two-thirds majority of the members present, provided these proposed By-Laws shall have been made available to the membership at least four weeks prior to the conference at which they are presented for adoption.