

PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION  
of  
(NAME OF CHURCH)  
(TOWN, STATE, ZIPCODE)

For the more certain preservation and the security of the principles of our faith, and to the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the accepted tenets of the Southern Baptist denomination 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 relation to other churches of the same faith, we do declare and establish this constitution.

I. NAME

This body shall be known as (NAME OF CHURCH), whose address is (address, town, state, zip code)

II. ARTICLES OF FAITH

The articles of faith of (NAME OF CHURCH), shall be those statements of the "200\_\_ Baptist Faith and Message" that were adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention.

III. CHURCH COVENANT

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 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, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines.

To contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

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

To walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Saviour.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer, to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling

and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Saviour to secure it without delay.

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

1. We believe that the Bible is God's Word to man and that it is the only sufficient authority as the rule of doctrine and practice.
2. We believe in a regenerated church membership and that the conversion experience is a prerequisite to church membership.
3. In the New Testament, the candidate was taken to the water, not the water brought to the candidate; the candidate was placed in the water, not the water put on the candidate; so we believe in immersion only as answering Christ's command of baptism and symbolizing the heart of the gospel message - death, burial, resurrection.
4. We believe in the New Testament order of baptism and the Lord's Supper. New Testament Christians were baptized before taking the Lord's Supper.
5. We believe in the right of each member of the church to a voice in its government, plans, and discipline. A Baptist church is a true democracy at work.
6. We believe in the freedom of the individual conscience; in the voluntary principle, not the coercive principle, in religion.
7. We believe in the total independence and separation of church and state.

#### IV. CHARACTER

##### SECTION 1. POLITY,

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist Churches.

##### SECTION 2. DOCTRINE,

This church receives the Scriptures as its authority in matters of faith and practice. Its understanding of Christian truth as contained therein is in essential accord with the belief of the Baptist Churches as indicated in the Articles of Faith herewith.

The name of this corporation is (NAME OF CHURCH).

This corporation is organized for the following purposes and to carry on the following purposes:

To be in fellowship with Christ and to minister in His name, to bring all men to Christ, and to guide Christians in growing toward Christ-likeness, through worship, proclamation, education, and ministry.

To engage in the buying and selling, leasing, renting, and trading of real estate and movables, the managing of real estate, to operate and manage office buildings and auditoriums, parsonages, educational buildings, and such other accessory buildings as are necessary to carry out the religious operation of this corporation, including the right to furnish and equip all buildings, offices, and other property and to rent said movables, equipment, and to provide any and all services that are made or may be useful for the successful operation of said church;

To borrow or raise money through tithes, pledges, and special gifts for any of the purposes of this corporation from time to time without limit as to amount and to execute, issue, buy and sell, mortgage, and hypothecate the same for all the objects and purposes of this corporation;

To enter into, make, and perform contracts of any and every kind or description with any person, firm, association, corporation; and with any municipality, parish, or state government that is consistent with the principal of "SEPARATION of CHURCH and STATE".

In general, to carry on any business not contrary to the laws of the State of Louisiana, and to have and exercise all of the powers provided by the laws of the said State in favor of non-profit corporations formed thereunder and to do any and all of the acts therein set forth to the same extent as natural persons could do;

To do everything necessary, proper, advisable, or convenient for the accomplishment of any of the powers herein set forth, and to do every other act and thing incidental thereto or connected therewith, provided same be not forbidden by the laws of the State of Louisiana;

The objects, purposes, and terms specified in any clause herein shall be in no manner limited or restricted by reference to or by inference from any other clause, but the objects, purposes and powers specified in each of the clauses of this article shall be regarded as independent objects, purposes, and powers and in furtherance and not in limitation of the general powers conferred by the laws of the State of Louisiana.

### ARTICLE III

This corporation shall enjoy corporate existence for a period of ninety-nine (99) years from date hereof.

### ARTICLE IV

The location and post office address of its registered office is:

(NAME OF CHURCH)  
(address)  
(town, state, zipcode)

### ARTICLE V

The name and post office addresses of its registered agents are:

(date revised) (if revised)

(Names and addresses of registered agents)

#### ARTICLE VI

The corporation shall be organized without capital stock, and membership shall be evidenced by the church roll kept by the church clerk.

The membership of this corporation shall consist of those who have made a public confession of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as their own personal Saviour; who have been baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; who have properly presented themselves for membership; and initially, by those who have voluntarily banded themselves together to form this church; and subsequently, by those who have been received by vote of the existing membership.

Membership of this corporation shall be terminated in the manner and procedure provided by the by-laws of said corporation.

#### ARTICLE VII

There shall be but one class of membership. Each member shall be equal in all other rights and privileges as every other member of this corporation.

#### ARTICLE VIII

Each member shall be entitled to one vote which shall be cast in person. Membership shall not be transferable by assignment or sale or by inheritance, or determination upon the death of the person, and no rights or membership belonging to the former owner shall inure to the assignee, vendee, heir, or legatee.

#### ARTICLE IX

This corporation shall be supported by tithes, contribution, and other gifts that may be made to it by its members and others, and this corporation is hereby specifically authorized to receive and accept donation inter vivos and mortis causa, further, that monies received from the sale of immovable or movable property may be used for this purpose.

#### ARTICLE X

The names of the present trustees and their post office addresses are as follows:

(Name and addresses of trustees)

The direction and administration of this corporation shall be vested in a Board of Trustees of members elected at an annual membership meeting and shall hold office for a term of one (1) year or until their successors are elected and installed.

The number, qualifications, terms of office, and manner of election, compensation, and powers and duties of the trustees, the time, place, and manner of calling, giving notice of, and conducting trustees' meetings, and the number of trustees which shall constitute a quorum shall be prescribed by the by-laws of this corporation.

Removal of members of the Board of Trustees and filling of vacancies on the Board of Trustees shall be determined by affirmative vote of the membership at a regularly called business meeting.

#### ARTICLE XI

At least one membership meeting shall be held each calendar year. This meeting shall take place in the month of September and will be held at such date and time as is set by the congregation in accordance with requirement of the by-laws.

Special membership meetings may be called at any time provided the call of this meeting meets all the requirements established in the by-laws of this corporation.

All meetings of this corporation shall be held at its registered office.

Business transacted at a regularly called business meeting shall be valid when affirmatively voted upon in the manner required by the by-laws of this corporation.

#### ARTICLE XII

The members of this corporation shall have the power to make, amend, and repeal by-laws to govern this corporation; provided they are in accordance with and do not conflict with these Articles.

#### ARTICLE XIII

This corporation may amend its Articles of Incorporation by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present at any business meeting, provided that the proposed amendments have been presented in writing at a previous meeting, and further provided that notice of the call of the meeting at which the amendment will be considered is published in the church bulletin, at least two (2) services prior to the date of the called meeting.

BY-LAWS  
of  
(NAME OF CHURCH)

Amendments to the By-Laws made in accordance to the Articles of Incorporation, (Article XIII). affirmed (date)

ARTICLE I

SECTION A. MEMBERSHIP

1. The membership of this church shall consist of those persons who have publicly professed faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, who have been baptized by immersion, who have been received by the vote of the church, and who consequently subscribed to the covenant and by-laws of this church.
2. Such other persons as may be admitted as herein after provided.
3. This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist Church, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the right of exclusive self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church.

SECTION B. ADDITIONS TO MEMBERSHIP

1. By Baptism  
Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ may be received as a candidate for baptism, and after baptism may be received into the membership of the church, having assented to and accepted the aims and ideals of this church as expressed in the church covenant.
2. By Letter  
Members of other Southern Baptist Churches of like faith and order may be received as members of this church by promise of letter from said church, and having been accepted by vote of this church.
3. By Experience and Restoration
  - a. An applicant for membership may be received as a member of this church upon their statement of baptism by immersion, and experience of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and after having accepted the aims and ideals of this church as expressed in the church covenant, and having been accepted by vote of this church.
  - b. Anyone who has been excluded from another Baptist Church may be received as members of this church upon repentance for the past and the promise to live a true Christian life if received into this church, and then having been accepted by vote of this church.
  - c. All persons baptized without immersion, seeking membership in this

church, must be received for baptism upon their profession of faith in Christ, and after baptism, having been accepted by vote of this church, may be received as members of this church.

#### SECTION C. DISMISSAL OF MEMBERS

##### 1. REQUEST OF LETTER

Any member in good standing, who has fulfilled his or her covenant duties to this church, or satisfactorily arranged the same, may upon vote of this church, be granted a letter of dismissal to unite with some other Southern Baptist Church of like faith and order as may be designated.

##### 2. UNITING WITH OTHER CHURCH OF ANOTHER FAITH

Any member of this church who shall unite with any other church of another faith shall have his or her name dropped from the rolls of this church.

##### 3. FELLOWSHIP OF CHURCH WITHDRAWN

Any member found guilty of unchristian conduct, immorality, or constantly disturbing the work and peace of the church may, upon action of the church, be dropped from the roll of this church, after the Board of Deacons has put into practice Matthew 18:15-17, in a faithful effort to restore such a one.

#### SECTION D. DUTIES

Members are expected, first of all to be faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian life. Also to attend habitually the services of this church, to give regularly for its support and its causes, and to share in its organized work as stated in the church covenant.

#### SECTION E. RIGHTS

Such members as are in full and regular standing, and do not hold letters of dismissal, and such only, may act and vote in the transactions of the church. Non-resident members will not be allowed to vote.

#### SECTION F. QUORUM

A quorum shall constitute the Members present at any business meeting called in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws.

### ARTICLE II

#### SECTION A. CHURCH OFFICERS

##### 1. PASTOR

- a. A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. His election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, provided that notice of the call of the meeting at which the election will be announced at least two (2) services prior to the date of the called meeting.

- b. A pulpit committee shall be elected by the church to seek out a suitable pastor, and their recommendation will constitute a nomination. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one man at a time. Election shall be by ballot or show of hands, with an affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of those present being necessary for election.
- c. The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated under the leadership of the Holy Spirit in the following manner:
  - 1. Mutual Christian consent
  - 2. Called for by the Church
    - a. The pastor's pastoral relation with the church shall be severed by a majority vote of the membership of the church present, and such action shall be taken only after not less than two week's notice, and said notice shall have been made at a regular morning worship service.
    - b. No less than two weeks salary shall be paid any pastor whose resignation shall be called for.
  - 3. Until called by the Lord to other service.
    - a. Any pastor desiring to end his pastoral relationship with the church shall give at least two week's notice of his intention.
    - b. The pastor shall at all times consider the welfare and oversight of the church.
    - c. The pastor shall preside at all meetings of the church, except as hereinafter provided.

## 2. DEACONS

- a. **NUMBER OF DEACONS**  
The number of deacons shall vary according to the needs of the church.
- b. **TERM OF ACTIVE SERVICE**  
The term of active service of all duly elected deacons shall be extended until such time as the church shall decide to establish a rotating election and service procedure.
- c. **QUALIFICATIONS**  
The qualifications shall be that all adult men of the church meeting the spiritual qualifications of the deaconship found in Acts 6:1-7; I Timothy 3:8-13; shall be eligible for election provided they have been a member in full and regular standing of Fordoche Baptist Church, as set forth by the by-laws of this corporation in Article I, Section D and

Section E, for at least one year.

1. An adult may be defined as a man who has assumed and proven himself capable of adult responsibilities in both church and secular matters.

d. METHOD OF ELECTION

The active deacons shall act as a Deacon Selection Committee.

1. Areas of counseling should include New Testament Qualifications, Church loyalty, support and attendance, church covenant, stewardship of time, talents and money.
2. Notice of those to be nominated shall be announced to the church; providing notice of the call of the meeting, at which the election will be considered, at least two (2) services prior to the date of the called meeting.
3. Opportunity for nominations from the floor shall be given in the meeting at which the election will be considered.
4. The church should furnish each newly elected Deacon a copy of Robert Naylor's book, The Baptist Deacon.

e. ORDINATION

The present active deacons and other ordained men of like faith, by the invitation of the active deacons, shall serve as the presbytery and ordination council to set apart the duly elected deacon.

f. DUTIES

1. In accordance with the meaning of the word and the practice of the New Testament, Deacons are to be servants of the church.
2. They are to be zealous to guard the unity of the Spirit within the church in the bonds of peace.
3. They shall serve as a council of advise and conference with pastor in all matters pertaining to the welfare and work of the church.
4. By proper organization and method among themselves, they are to establish and maintain personal fraternal relations with, and inspiring oversight, of all the membership of the church.
5. Especially are they to seek to know the physical needs and the moral and spiritual struggles of the brethren and sisters; and to serve the whole church in relieving, encouraging, and developing all who are in need.

3. MODERATOR

The moderator shall be the pastor. In the absence of the pastor, the chairman of the deacons shall preside; or in the absence of both, the clerk shall call the church to order, and a moderator pro tem shall be elected.

#### 4. CLERK

- a. The clerk of the church shall keep in a suitable book a record of all the actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided.
- b. He/she shall keep a register of the names of members, with dates of admission, dismissal, or death, together with a record of baptisms.
- c. He/she shall also notify all officers, members of committees, and delegates of their election or appointment.
- d. He/she shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church, preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give legal notice of all meetings where such notice is necessary, as indicated in these by-laws.

#### 5. TREASURER

- a. The church shall elect annually a church treasurer. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out, all money, or things of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements, using standard account methods.
- b. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the deacons at each regular monthly meeting an itemized report of all receipts and disbursements for the preceding month, and this report shall be read to the church in its regular monthly business meeting and he/she shall provide copies of the report.
- c. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive the empty collection envelopes after the money has been removed and counted, and from these, he/she shall give each donor individual credit as provided in the church Finance Record System published by Broadman Press and Supplies. He/she shall be responsible for preparing and issuing annual statements to all contributing members.
- d. After the end of the physical year, the treasurer shall render to the deacons and to the church an annual report showing the total amount of receipts, and an itemized statement of all disbursements.
- e. All records, and accounts kept by the treasurer shall be considered the property of the church.
- f. The Treasurer shall, at no time, divulge the stewardship of the members. The individual members can at any time consult with the treasurer regarding his/her own personal stewardship

#### 6. MUSIC DIRECTOR

The music director shall be charged with responsibility to provide worshipful music for all services and departments of the church, and shall have general oversight and direction of the music. He is to direct the choir and choirs in practice and public singing, and is to cooperate with the pastor and other leaders in the selection of suitable music and the devising of appropriate musical programs for all occasions where such services are needed.

## 7. OFFICERS of CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS

Each of the following organizations should have their directors nominated by the nominating committee and elected by the church in August and they shall assist the nominating committee in selecting nominations for the leaders of their respective organizations, to be voted on in the annual meeting as herein stated by the by-laws.

- a. Sunday School
- b. Discipleship Training

## ARTICLE III

### SECTION A. CHURCH COMMITTEES

#### 1. General Information

- a. Select committees shall be created and elected by the church according to needs. The pastor is an ex-officio member of all committees.
- b. Standing committees shall be elected annually.
  1. All standing committees except the Nominating Committee shall serve from October 1 through September 30.
  2. The Nominating Committee shall serve from July 1 through June 30.

#### 2. STANDING COMMITTEES

- a. Baptismal Committee  
This committee shall consist of two members; one shall be a woman and one shall be a man. The duties are as follows
  1. Contact candidates and confirm dates and conditions of baptism and report such to pastor.
  2. Make physical arrangements for the baptismal service and care for robes and equipment used in the service.
  3. Assist the pastor in the baptismal service.
- b. Budget and Finance Committee  
This committee shall consist of the treasurer, the deacons, and two other church members. The duties are as follows:
  1. Obtain from the various committees, organizations, and staff members estimates of their necessary expenditures for the year.

2. Plan and submit to the church a budget within the estimated income and which meets the needs of the various organizations as nearly as possible.
3. Oversee the expenditure of monies to ensure that the budgeted amounts are not exceeded.
4. Consider requests from committees and/or the church membership for expenditures outside the budgeted allotments and advise the church how these expenditures would effect the financial standing of the church.
5. In the event of a significant deficit or excess of money, this committee shall recommend to the church what action should be taken to correct the deficit or to utilize the surplus funds.

c. Flower Committee

This committee shall be responsible for all flowers in the Sanctuary. This includes the giving of memorial flowers and other special occasions throughout the year. This committee's decision is final in all matters concerning flowers in the Sanctuary.

d. Hostess Committee

The Hostess committee shall consist of four members with the following duties:

1. Make necessary arrangements for Fellowships and other church-wide socials as outlined in the church calendar.
2. This committee must be given seven (7) days notice if expected to make proper arrangements.
3. Work with the pastor to provide necessary comforts as required for visiting speakers, pulpit guests, and teachers.

e. Lord's Supper Committee

1. The membership of this committee shall be composed of the deacons and their wives.
2. This committee shall be responsible for preparing, cleaning, and storing all materials relating to this ordinance.
3. Upon the authorization of the church, this committee shall select and purchase necessary equipment.

f. Missions Committee

The missions committee shall be responsible for supervising the mission work of the church.

g. Nominating Committee

This committee shall consist of five members. Three (3) elected by the church. When the Sunday School Director and the Discipleship Training Director are elected, they shall be members of the nominating committee .

1. Duties of this committee are as follows:

- a. Maintain a list of all church members who are available and qualified for holding office.
- b. Present to the church before the beginning of the church year, its nominations for the various offices and committees of the church.
- c. Present to the church its nomination for replacements and/or additions to the church elected personnel as needs arise during the year.
- d. Present to the church at the June business meeting its nominations for Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary of the incoming Nominating Committee, who in turn will then proceed at their earliest convenience to present to the church their nominations for Sunday School Director and Discipleship Training Director.

i. Building and Grounds Committee

This committee shall consist of members including at least one (1) deacon and one (1) woman. Duties of this committee are as follows:

1. Maintain and beautify existing church property, including church building , grounds, and parsonage.
2. Supervise janitorial and maintenance employees.
3. Keep an adequate supply of maintenance supplies on hand within the authorized budget. Recommendations for purchase of maintenance equipment, not included in the budget, should be made to the church after coordination with the budget and finance committee.
4. Recommendations for building alternations should be made to the church by this committee. Recommendations for major repairs, not included in the maintenance budget, should be made to the church after coordination with the budget and finance committee.

j. Teller Committee

The Teller Committee shall consist of church members and have the following duties:

1. Arrange for collecting, counting, and depositing all monies received by the church.
2. Establish and administer routines that minimize the danger of any church funds being lost or stolen.

k. Trustees

1. Trustees and their successors shall hold the legal title to the property of the church in its behalf, but shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property or take any other action without a specific vote of the church authorizing such action.
2. Trustees shall act as the official agent in the transactions of legal matters pertaining to Fordoche Baptist Church of Fordoche, La. Inc.
3. Trustees signatures on legal matters pertaining to Fordoche Baptist Church of Fordoche, La. Inc. are not to be considered as personal endorsements; but, rather as agents, representing Fordoche Baptist Church of Fordoche, La. Inc.
4. A quorum shall consist of two members.
5. Qualifications for the office of trustee shall be the same as for "adults" as defined in Article II, Deacons, C. Qualifications
6. The trustees shall be elected annually who shall serve without compensation.

l. Director of Ushers

The Director of Ushers shall have the following duties:

1. Arrange for ushers at Sunday services and special occasions.
2. Maintain an adequate supply of visitors cards for distribution to visitors.
3. See that each visitor receives a warm, friendly welcome and is given all possible assistance.

ARTICLE IV

## SECTION A. MEETINGS

### 1. WORSHIP

- a. Worship services shall be held stately on the Lord's Day (Sunday).
- b. Mid-week Prayer services shall be held on Wednesday evening of each week.
- c. The Lord's Supper shall be celebrated on the first Sunday of each quarter, or at such other time as the Church may determine.
- d. Occasional religious meetings may be appointed by the pastor at his discretion, or by vote of the Church.

### 2. BUSINESS

- a. At any of the regular meetings of worship, the church may, without special notice, act upon the reception of members or upon the dismissal of members to other churches, and upon the appointment of delegates to councils, but not upon other business.
- b. The regular business meeting shall be held on the first Wednesday after the first Sunday.
- c. Additional business meetings must be announced to the Church in two (2) services prior to the meeting.
- d. Quorums for meetings shall be in accordance with Article 1, Section F, of the By-Laws.
- e. Organizational meetings shall be held according to the agreed schedules of the organizations and church.

## ARTICLE V

### SECTION A. DISCIPLINE

1. Should any unhappy differences arise between members, the aggrieved member shall follow, in a tender spirit, the rules given by our Lord in the eighteenth (18th) chapter of Matthew.
2. Should any case of gross breach of covenant, or of public scandal, occur, the deacons shall endeavor to correct the offense; and if such effort fail, shall report the case to the church.
3. If the church votes to entertain a complaint, which must be made in writing, it shall appoint a reasonable time and place of hearing and notify the person in question thereof, furnishing him with a copy of the complaint.
4. At such hearing, the accused member may call to his aid any member of the church as counsel. If he/she should present himself at the time appointed, or give satisfactory reasons for his/her neglect so to do, the church may proceed in his/her absence.
5. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance, but should an adverse decision be reached, the church may

proceed to admonish the offender or declare him/her to be no longer in the membership on the church.

## ARTICLE VI

### SECTION A. CHURCH COUNCIL

1. The Church Council, upon being established by authorization of the church, shall seek to correlate and co-ordinate the activities and organizations of the church, yet with advisory power only; and shall plan the church calendar of activities.
2. The Council shall be composed of pastor, staff members, clerk, treasurer, music director, one of more deacons, and sunday school director, discipleship training director, woman's missionary union director, brotherhood director.
3. The Council shall meet on call of the pastor or moderator at any time deemed necessary.

## ARTICLE VII

### SECTION A. USE OF FACILITIES

1. Use of the buildings and other facilities owned and or controlled by (NAME OF CHURCH). shall be governed by the affirmative vote of the church body in the manner required by the by-laws of this corporation.
2. The main church auditorium, known as the Sanctuary, may, by the approval of the Pastor or the Deacon body, be used for funerals, weddings, and other approved events of a sacred or holy nature.
3. The educational building, fellowship hall and church grounds, may be used for private showers, private fellowships and other private social events by "members only". There will be a \$50.00 donation required per day, to cover out of pocket expenses for utilities and etc. The member requesting use of the building and/or grounds is to be responsible for cleaning the facility up and leaving it in good, clean condition, ready for use again.
  - a. "Members only" are defined as members of full and regular standing as set forth by the by-laws of this corporation, Article I, Section D and Section E.
  - b. Such member can use the facilities for an immediate member of their family (parents, children, grandchildren); but, not to include cousins, aunts, uncles and other relatives of a distant nature.
  - c. A member using the facility for a private event must receive approval of the Pastor or Deacon body on a first come, first serve basis. Dates of Private events should be posted in the church calendar and/or church bulletin, with care being taken to reserve those dates; but, in the event of a conflict in the dates involved, a church sponsored event will take priority over the private event. The Pastor or Deacon body may make a final decision if a dispute arises.

## ARTICLE VIII

### SECTION A. SEXUAL HARASSMENT

1. Sexual harassment Policy:

Sexual harassment is a violation of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Strict compliance is the policy of (NAME OF CHURCH).

2. Recognizing Sexual Harassment:

Sexual harassment may be defined as unsolicited, offensive behavior that inappropriately asserts sexuality over members.

Examples of sexual harassment:

<u>Verbal (spoken)</u>	<u>Non-Verbal</u>	<u>Physical</u>
sexual innuendoes	leering	touching
suggestive comments	whistling	pinching
insults	obscene gestures	brushing the body
humor and jokes about sex		assault
threats or sexual demands		coerced sexual act

3. Leadership Responsibility:

Sexual harassment undermines Christian morale, interferes with Christianity and causes hostility in the church. The leadership of (NAME OF CHURCH) strongly disapproves of sexual harassment and will take appropriate action to end sexual harassment and to prevent a recurrence of any such misconduct.

Whether or not a particular incident is the result of a social relationship without sexual harassment requires complete factual investigation. Given the nature of this type of discrimination, the Church recognizes that false accusations of sexual harassment can have serious effects on innocent women and men.

4. Procedure of Filing a Complaint:

A person who believes he or she has been the subject of sexual harassment should report the alleged act immediately or as soon as possible to (1) Pastor, (2) Chairman of deacons, or (3) our Youth Director. It is not necessary for a person to complain first to an offending leader in order to report sexual harassment.

5. Investigation:

(NAME OF CHURCH) will investigate each charge of sexual harassment by confidentially gathering information from all concerned. (NAME OF CHURCH) will not retaliate against any person because of reports of alleged harassment or because of cooperation with any investigation. For doche Baptist Church may consult with its attorneys in order to determine whether any conduct found to have occurred constitutes sexual harassment. If sexual harassment is found to have occurred, (NAME OF CHURCH) may make subsequent inquiries, from time to time, to ensure that any such harassment has not resumed and that the subject of any such harassment has not suffered any retaliation.

6. Discipline:

Any member of (NAME OF CHURCH) found by the Church to have sexually harassed another person will be subject to appropriate discipline.

## ARTICLE IX

### SECTION A: CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

1. **PURPOSE:**

To adopt guide lines for (NAME OF CHURCH), with a desire to protect the children and workers in the church, from sexual misconduct. Because of the increase in allegations against churches, and recognizing that all churches are exposed to this risk, the following policies and procedures are intended to reduce our church=s risk of a sexual misconduct allegation.

2. **DEFINITION:**

Sexual misconduct is defined as any sexual activity involving a church employee or volunteer with a child. (*Reference LOUISIANA Statues' Childrens Code, Articles 603, 609, 610, 611.*)

3. **PREVENTION:**

No person who is known to have been convicted of sexual misconduct or abuse will be allowed to work with children. All persons considered for children=s work will be screened by the proper church authorities.

Children should have parental permission to participate in all church sponsored programs or activities which take place away from the church. Chaperons will be provided for youth and children=s activities whether on or off premises.

4. **REPORTING PROCEDURES:**

All allegations will be taken as worthy of investigation. Any person who suspects improper activity should report it immediately to the Pastor or Deacon chairman. These reports will be treated with strict confidentiality,

Allegations deemed to have merit will be *reported* to the proper law enforcement authorities, and the insurance company. Presumption of innocence will be maintained until completion of the investigation.

### SECTION B: CHILD CARE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1. **STATEMENT:**

Child sexual abuse is an exploitation of a child's vulnerability and powerlessness where the abuser is responsible for the incident(s). In order to reduce the risk of child abuse from occurring at (NAME OF CHURCH), the following policies and procedures have been developed,

approved and implemented by the governing body of this Church.

These policies apply to anyone within the church who works with children or youth in any capacity. By definition, a Child or Youth Worker includes all paid or volunteer staff who work directly with children or youth. This would include, but is not limited to, the following people, Nursery Workers, Vacation Bible School Workers, Sunday School Workers, Children Workers and Youth Workers.

The adoption of this policy is in no way to insinuate that a case of misconduct or abuse has occurred. This policy is to insure, that in the event of sexual misconduct or abuse, (NAME OF CHURCH) has in place a proper procedure for handling such allegations.

## 2. **POLICES AND PROCEDURES:**

### 1. Indicators of child Sexual abuse:

A. Child Sexual Abuse, as defined by the state of Louisiana in **West's Louisiana Statutes** Annotated Child Code 1994 is as follows:

1.) Article 603 Section(lc):

"The involvement of a child in any sexual act with a parent or any other person, or the aiding or toleration by the parent or caretaker of a child's sexual involvement with any other person, or of a child's involvement in pornographic displays or any other involvement of a child in sexual activity constituting a crime under the laws of the stated?

2.) Article 603 Section 5,

"A CHILD means a person under 18 years of age prior to the juvenile proceedings and has not been judicially emancipated under civil code Article 385 or emancipated by marriage under civil code Articles 379-384. "

3.) Article 603 Section 7;

A CHILD PORNOGRAPHY visual depiction of a child engaged in actual or simulated sexual intercourse, deviant sexual intercourse, sexual bestiality, masturbation, sadomasochistic abuse, or lewd exhibition of the genitals "

## II **Recruiting and Selecting Children & Youth Workers**

both paid or volunteer and full-time or part- time workers.

### A. Screening Procedures:

1.) All paid workers will fill out an employment application.

2.) All paid or volunteer children and youth workers will be interviewed by the Pastor, and/or screening team.

3.) Reference checks will be completed for all paid or volunteer children and youth workers before given any responsibilities.

### B. Additional Screening Requirements for children and youth workers:

1.) ONLY members of the congregation, in good standing, will be

allowed to serve as APRIMARY@ children and youth workers. All other volunteers or paid employees will be assigned to work under a children or youth coordinator and will be directly supervised by that coordinator at all times.

2.) All new members will be required to wait 6 months before applying for a children or youth position, working directly with children or youth.

3.) All children and youth workers will participate in an orientation program which details the church's policies and procedures concerning child sexual abuse prevention and the behavioral parameters and expectations of children and youth workers.

4.) Anyone who has been convicted of, plead guilty to, or has charges pending concerning either child sexual abuse or physical abuse will NOT be allowed to work with children or youth in any capacity.

### III. **Supervision of Children and Youth Workers**

#### A. Team Approach

1.) Whenever possible, there will be two (2) adults per group of children or youth.

#### B. Parental Permission

1 ) Children and youth should have parental permission to participate in all church sponsored programs or activities which take place away from the church.

### IV. **Reporting Procedures:**

#### A. Suspicious Behavior:

1.) Any inappropriate conduct or relationship between an adult worker and a child or youth MUST be reported immediately to the adult-in-charge or the pastor, whether witnessed directly or reported to an adult by a child. The Pastor will document the report and investigate the situation.

#### **RULE-OF-THUMB:**

If you feel uncomfortable seeing any behavior between a Child or Youth worker and a child or youth, it is probably inappropriate and needs to be reported, Reporting a suspected incident of child sexual or physical abuse reflects a caring, Christian concern for all those involved. All reports are CONFIDENTIAL and will be handled discreetly with the utmost care.

2.) Prompt warnings will be given and documented when deemed appropriate by the Pastor and stricter supervision of the worker will be

implemented immediately.

3.) Any Second warnings that may be needed will be documented and result in immediate dismissal of the children or youth worker.

4.) Sexual conduct of any nature is to be reported immediately to the Pastor or adult -in-charge. The incident will be documented and investigated in the appropriate manner per the state's guidelines.

**B. State of Louisiana guidelines**

for reporting Child Sexual Abuse are as follows and will be strictly followed by all members of F.B.C.

(Reference Source; West=s Louisiana Statutes Annotated Children's Code 1994, Title VI Child in Need of care)

1.) Who are Required to Report? Chapter 5, Article 609;  
Mandatory Reporters relevant to church work include any children and youth workers

2.) Length of time required to make a report? Chapter 5, Article 610;  
Upon receipt of allegations of child sexual abuse, a verbal report is to be made within 24 hours by telephone to the appropriate agency, followed within five (5) days by a written report.

3.) The report will include the following information per Chapter 5, Article 610.

- a. Name, age, address, sex, race, of the victim,
- b. Name, address, phone number *of* the victim' parents or *legal* guardian.
- c. Name, age, and sex of all other household members.
- d. Name and address of the reporter.
- e. Nature of the incident
- f. Name, age, address, sex, race, phone number of the alleged perpetrator.
- g. Explanation of the cause by the child, caretaker and/or others involved,
- h. An account of how the child came to the reporter's attention.

4.) Agency to be contacted: Chapter 5, Article 610:

Inside the City Limits Call:

(Name and Phone number of Agency)

Outside the City Limits Call:

(Name and Phone number of Agency)

5.) "Good Faith" Reporting: Chapter 5, Article 611:

Any report made in "good faith" or reporter who is cooperating in an investigation will receive immunity from civil or enmity liability. Anyone knowingly making a false report or making reports with reckless disregard for the truth will be subject to civil and or criminal litigation.

**V. Plan of Response:**

A. All allegations of child sexual or physical abuse will be taken seriously.

B. Reports will be investigated immediately affording due respect for the privacy and confidentiality of those involved,

C. All reports will be documented, along with the plan of action, which was taken to correct the situation.

D. Reports will be made to the state as required.

E. The insurance company will be notified immediately upon the substantiation of any incident and an attorney will be retained.

F. Counseling services will be recommended and sought for all those involved in the incident (Pastoral counseling, ministry team, or Christian counseling)

## ARTICLE X

### SECTION A. AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the By-Laws may be made in accordance to the Articles of Incorporation, (Article XIII).

MAY 07, 1997: ARTICLE IX added to By-Laws as per Article X