



Constitution & Bylaws Final Draft

Presented: August 26, 2009

Introduction

A church is a fellowship of people who have accepted Christ as Savior and are united by their common relation to the Holy Spirit. A church, like a community or an individual, is always changing. Fundamental doctrines remain the same, but methods of teaching these doctrines and of moving toward objectives must change if the mission of the church is to be accomplished.

A church constitution and bylaws document helps a church preserve democratic procedures. This instrument serves as the guide for members to follow through in carrying out the work of the church.

Basic theology, organizational structure, and church policies are contained in a constitution. Bylaws, on the other hand, state the methods for expediting these principles and policies. Bylaws will usually be changed more often than the constitution. As the program of a church changes, so must its rules of governmental procedure be brought up to date.

The basic advantages of a constitution and bylaws are:

1. Furnishes members a written statement of their church organization, fundamental guidelines, and theological beliefs
2. Aids in preserving democracy and harmony since predetermined guidelines have already been established by the members
3. Provides orderly procedures for guiding the transaction of church business
4. Serves as a basis for addressing challenges before problems arise

During a business meeting held on August 27, 2008, the Church appointed an interim Church Council group consisting of ten men: Eric Evans, Jerry Evans, Paul Ferguson, Brent Marsh, Sam Nichols, Tim Stary, Doug Tervooren, Elmer Wells, Rusty Wheelington, and Woody Wood. One of the Church Council's tasks was to revise the Bylaws. The revised document was approved by the Church _____, 2009.



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Constitution

Preamble

We declare and establish this Constitution for the preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and so that this body may be governed in an orderly manner. This Constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual member of this Church and the freedom of action of this body in its relation to other churches of the same faith.

I. Name and Principal Office

The name of this Corporation is SOUTHSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH (d.b.a., SOUTHSIDE CHURCH). This Corporation may also hereinafter be further referred to in the Bylaws as "the Church." The Church maintains its principal office at 1219 Indian Creek Drive, Brownwood, Texas 76801. These Amended and Restated Bylaws (these "Bylaws") govern the affairs of Southside Church, a Texas non-profit corporation. The Church "is organized under the Texas Nonprofit Corporation Act, as amended (the "Act"), for Religious purposes. [501 c 3 .] These Bylaws amend and replace, in their entirety, the previous Bylaws of the Church, as amended December 5, 1984. The Church shall comply with the requirements of the Act and maintain a registered office and registered agent in Texas. The registered office is the Church's principal office in Texas at the address set forth above. Unless otherwise designated, the Secretary of the Elders shall be the Registered Agent for the Church and a statement as required by law shall be filed with the probate judge.

II. Statement of Faith

The Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God and is the basis for any statement of faith. The Church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of the Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention. We band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind. The ordinances of the Church are baptism and the Lord's Supper.

III. Church Covenant

Having been led, as we believe by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and, upon the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God, 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 private devotions; to educate our children in the Faith; 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 conduct; to avoid all gossiping, backbiting, and excessive anger; to be exceedingly prudent in the use of, intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

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

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.

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 among Baptist churches. Insofar as is practical, this Church will cooperate with and support the local Baptist network and state convention affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

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 beliefs of other Southern Baptist churches.

Bylaws

V. Membership

Section 1. General

This is a sovereign and Elder-led 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 2. Candidacy

Any person may offer himself as a candidate for membership in this Church in any of the following ways:

By profession of faith and for baptism according to the policies of this Church

By promise of a letter from another Baptist and/or other church of like faith and order

By restoration upon a statement of prior conversion experience and baptism by immersion when no letter is obtainable

Should there be any dissent as to any candidate, such dissent shall be referred to the Pastor and the Elders for investigation and the making of a decision to the Church within thirty (30) days. A consensus of the Elders shall be required to approve such candidates to membership.

Section 3. Privileges of Church Members

The following actions require a two-thirds majority vote based on quorum, which consists of those members who attend the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called. An exception to this voting threshold is the Pastor appointment, which must receive at least 90% affirmative votes of those present.

(1) Amendments to the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws

(2) Appointment of individuals for the following Church leadership positions:

- a. Non-staff Elders and called Pastoral Staff
- b. Deacons
- c. Pastor Search Team Members
- d. Trustees
- e. Members of Finance Team and Personnel Team
- f. Chairperson of all other Teams described in these Bylaws except Pastor Search Team

(3) The Church budget as presented at the annual budget approval meeting in August and proposed changes in budget expenditures which exceed 5% of the annual Church budget.

(4) Purchase or sale of real estate.

(5) Incurrence of debt.

(6) Other matters deemed necessary by the Elders.

All other decisions concerning the management and affairs of the Church shall be made by the Elders and Church staff or administrative teams as further described in these Bylaws.

Members 18 years of age and older are entitled to speak to and vote on all

matters requiring Church action in a business meeting. Members are eligible for consideration as candidates for leadership positions in the Church subject to scriptural qualifications and other qualifications set forth in these Bylaws. Members may address the Elders, Church staff, Deacons, or administrative teams to offer counsel or request information.

Section 4. Termination of Membership

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

Death

Transfer of membership

Exclusion by action of this Church *

Removal from Church membership roll by member request or inactivity for a period of not less than one year

* Should a member become an offense to the Church and to its good name by reason of immoral or un-Christian conduct, or by persistent breach of his covenant vows, the Church may terminate his membership by a consensus decision of the Elders, but only after faithful efforts have been made to bring such member to repentance and restoration.

VI. Church Officers

The Church leadership shall be comprised of the Elders/Pastoral Staff, Ministerial Staff, and Deacons.

Section 1. Pastor(s)

The Pastors are responsible for leading the congregation in functioning as a New Testament church, assisted, advised, and held in mutual accountability with the Elders. Pastors will provide oversight of their assigned ministry roles as defined in their job descriptions (Appendices B). Paid pastoral positions, whether part-time or full-time, could include but are not necessarily limited to: Pastor, Administration Pastor, Assimilation Pastor, Student Pastor, Teaching Pastor, and Worship Pastor. Pastors shall be chosen and called by the Church whenever a vacancy occurs. Pastors shall be men. Election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least two week's public notice shall be given.

Section 2. Elders

The Elders shall act as the governing body of the Church, providing discernment and oversight in all matters pertaining to the work of the Church and its various ministries.

(1) Responsibilities

Elders are called to serve and provide spiritual protection for the Church body and are accountable to the Church membership. The responsibility of Elders includes providing overall leadership to the Church in prayer, ministry of the Word, advice to the Pastor(s), and pastoral care. They are to set the example for all Church members by their obedience to the mission of Christ and His Church (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 6:3-4; 20:28-31; 1 Corinthians. 4:14-16; 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 5:17; Hebrews. 13:7, 17; 1 Peter. 5:1-4).

(2) Qualifications

The Elders will be selected from the adult membership of the Church as led by the Holy Spirit and affirmed by the congregation. An Elder must have been an active member of Southside Church for at least two years preceding congregational affirmation and must have given evidence of spiritual maturity, leadership and service during this time. In addition to membership requirements, an Elder and his wife, if married, must (1) be regular in attendance at one of the Worship services; (2) be a regular attendee of Life Connection or a similar Southside-administered small group; (3) be a proven, generous, systematic giver to the Church operating budget and giver of his time, resources, and spiritual gifts to accomplish the purpose of Southside Church; and (4) demonstrate evidence daily of an authentic walk with God and a commitment to the cause of Christ. An Elder must be a man who uses scriptural principles to make decisions in life and will use Scripture to inform decisions concerning the Church.

(3) Attributes

The call to eldership is to be taken seriously. The Scriptures clearly articulate the activities, attitudes, and attributes expected of Elders. Church members are encouraged to familiarize themselves with these passages so they can be knowledgeable and discerning of Elder selection and leadership.

The Jewish Christian Elders at Work (Acts 11:30; 15:1-22; 21:17-26)

Praying for the Sick (James 5:13-15)

Appointing Elders (Acts 14:23)

Guarding the Church from False Teachers (Acts 20:17-28)

Hard Working Men (I Thessalonians 5:12,13)

The Relationship between Elders and Congregation (I Thessalonians 5:13b)

Shared Brotherly Leadership (Philippians 1:1)

The Elders' Work, Attitudes, and Rewards (I Peter 5:1-5)

Congregational Submission (Hebrews 13:17)

Only the Qualified Can Serve as Elders (Titus 1:5-9)

A Noble Work Demands Noble Men: More Qualifications (I Timothy 3:1-7)

Male Leadership (I Timothy 2:9-15)

The Laying on of Hands and Ordination (I Timothy 4:14)

Elders Who Labor at Teaching: Worthy of Double Honor (I Timothy 4:14)

Nonclerical Leadership (I Timothy 5:17,18)

Protecting, Disciplining, and Assessing an Elder (I Timothy 5:19-25)

Source: Strauch, A. (1988). *Biblical eldership: An urgent call to restore biblical church leadership* (2nd ed.). Littleton, CO: Lewis & Roth.

Complete scripture passages are located in Appendix A.

(4) Job Description

The objective of Elder polity is to use godly men to assist the staff in building a strong Church with biblical structure so that the work of the ministry can be accomplished. Elder leadership is beneficial because it involves more people in decision making, yet allows decisions to be made with fuller knowledge, as opposed to an entire Church-wide vote over less significant decisions without complete information or insight by congregants. In the time between Pastors, the Elders will appoint a Pastoral staff member to be responsible for day-to-day duties of the Church and the supervision of staff and ministries. That staff member will report to the Elders. The Elders will be responsible for securing appropriate pulpit supply. Should the Elders determine the necessity for an interim Pastor (or interim preacher), they will have the responsibility of identifying and hiring that person. A Church vote is not required. In addition to the above described duties, Elders will also undertake the following:

1. Serve as advisors to the Pastor(s).
2. Make financial decisions of non--budgeted expenses upon request of the finance team.
3. Review the annual budget following the finance team's recommendation prior to Church approval.
4. Involved in church discipline matters in accordance with Matthew 18.
5. Oversee Deacons in carrying out their ministry, duties, and responsibilities. Select additional Deacons as needed in compliance with these Bylaws.
6. Special ministry responsibilities as they see them arise and requested by Pastor.
7. Interview, screen, and recommend to the Church additional Elders as needed in compliance with these Bylaws.
8. The Pastor will typically facilitate Elder meetings, but all Elders have equal standing and voice.
9. Elders will select candidates for Personnel and Finance Team as well as Team Leadership positions.

(5) Accountability and Team Work

Elders must be willing to be accountable to each other, being authentic about their family, relationships, finances, work life, and overall integrity. At meetings, there will be a time to meet one-on-one or in small groups specifically for the reason of accountability and prayer. In order to build a team and work together, regular attendance is essential. Elders must be willing to prioritize each meeting and do their best to be in attendance at all meetings. To be a team and build unity and work as a team, Elders will meet at least twice each month (weekly is preferable) for prayer, accountability, ministry, and business. Elders should function as a team just as called, paid staff function. Elders should be able to envision long-term goals while also being mindful of the short-term realities.

(6) Number and Term of Service

The Elders will consist of up to five laymen, the Pastor, and other called Pastors as deemed prudent and as appointed by the Elders. Each Elder shall be called for an unlimited term of service.

(7) Selection

Upon approval by the Church of these Bylaws, initial selection of Elders will take place. The interim Church Council, which was established August 27, 2008, revised the 1984 Bylaws in which was proposed Elder polity structure as outlined in these Bylaws. Initial selection of Elders will proceed similarly to addition or replacement of Elders. (1) The Church Council ("Elders" after initial selection) will receive nominations for at least 30 days for new Elders from the Church membership. (2) Prospective Elders will then complete an application/questionnaire and interview with the Elder council. (3) As led by the Holy Spirit and after considerable prayer and dialogue, the Elders will post a final nominee list and provide a forum for member feedback. (4) The Elders will present the proposed Elder(s) to the Church at a quarterly business meeting or a special business meeting for affirmation. (5) Upon affirmation, the new Elder(s) will serve in a mentoring capacity alongside an existing Elder for one year. (6) Evaluations will be completed every four months during the first year by the Elders.

(8) Removal

An Elder may be removed from office by resignation, death, or grievance. A grievance is something that violates the attributes, job description, or qualifications as defined by these Bylaws. Such grievance may be brought before the Elders as appropriate using the model found in Matthew 18. Upon completion of this process, the Elders will reach a consensus decision and the Elder under consideration may or may not be removed from appointment.

Section 3. Deacons

The Church may appoint as many Deacons as it feels are needed to carry out the ministry of the Church. The need for additional Deacons can be brought to the attention of the Elders/Pastor(s) by any member of the Church at any time. A pastoral staff member will serve as ex-officio member of the diaconate.

Deacon Nomination, Selection, and Training Process

After the need for additional Deacons is determined, each member may submit names to the Elders for consideration. The Elders will submit to the Deacons the names of nominees to be interviewed regarding their willingness to serve and qualifications. A Deacon may be either male or female understanding that the spouse must be willing to serve alongside and also fit the qualifications of a Deacon. Those candidates who meet the qualifications shall, upon recommendation by the Deacons, be invited to a six-month period of training and observation. Their names shall be made known to the Church for prayer and observation. Those who have met the qualifications shall, at the conclusion of the six-month period, be listed on a ballot and appointed by the Church during a business meeting. Nominees must receive two-thirds affirmative votes to be eligible for the office of deacon.

Term of Service

All elected Deacons shall have permanent tenure except when the Church establishes a rotation system. Any deacon may ask to be relieved from active status on his own request. Reinstatement to active status shall be handled in the same manner as other Deacons coming into our fellowship. There is no obligation to constitute as a deacon a brother who comes from another church where he has served as deacon. Such an individual would go through the same process as a deacon appointee from within the congregation. Deacon nominees must be members and have been attending for at least two years.

Job Description

In accordance with the meaning of the work and the practice of the New Testament, Deacons are to be servants of the Church. Deacons will be expected to fulfill the following duties:

1. Participate in all scheduled deacon body activities, unless providentially hindered.
2. Carry out shut-in ministry and guest visitation assignments as scheduled, and submit reports.
3. Assist in preparing and serving the Lord's Supper as scheduled.
4. Minister to assigned widows/widowers and submit monthly reports of this ministry.
5. Serve alongside another Deacon (spouse if applicable) and attend called deacon meetings and training sessions with that individual.

Attributes

The characteristics and qualities of Deacons are outlined in several Scripture passages. Following nomination to the position, deacon candidates must complete an application and interview process in which their qualifications for the position will be examined.

Capable of serving the LORD in spiritual ways (Acts 8:5-7)

Possessing a firm grasp of sound doctrine (Acts 6:9)

Deacons should advance the unity of the Church (Acts 6:5)

Deacons should advance the cause of evangelism (Acts 6:8)

Deacons must be worthy of respect, sincere, not prone to drunkenness nor pursuing dishonest gain nor malicious talkers, temperate, and trustworthy (I Timothy 3:8-11)

Deacons must be faithfully married to one spouse and must manage their households well (I Timothy 3:12)

Section 4. Pastor Search Team

When a vacancy occurs in the Pastor position, the Elders shall meet with the chairpersons of all ministry teams to develop a list of nominees for the seven-member (plus two non-voting alternates) Pastor search team. The list of nominees will represent a reasonable cross section of the Church, all of whom must be mem-

bers. Any member of the Church is eligible for nomination to the search committee.

The Elders shall call a meeting of the Church to present the list of nominees and to elect a search team. The names of the nominees shall appear in the call to the meeting. Any member of the Church may submit to this meeting additional name(s) provided the additional nominee(s) have provided written consent. When the list of nominees has been completed, the members present shall be provided with ballots on which each may vote for not more than seven nominees. The nominees receiving the highest numbers of votes shall be elected to the search team, which shall choose its own presiding officer and adopt its own rules of operation.

The search team shall be responsible to and shall periodically report to the Elders, which in turn recognizes the need for the team to maintain the confidentiality of both the candidate(s) and the team. The duties and powers of the search team may be terminated at the discretion of the Church. In the event that a team member is no longer able to continue active participation on the team, the first alternate will fill the vacancy. Should another vacancy occur, the second alternate will fill the vacancy.

When the search team has identified an appropriate candidate for the position of Pastor, he shall meet with the Elders. After both the Elders and the search team have conferred and are in agreement, the candidate shall be introduced to the congregation and at a special meeting for a question/answer session and proposal that the candidate be called to serve the Church. The team's recommendation will constitute a nomination, though any member has the privilege of making other nominations to the search team. The team shall bring to the consideration of the Church only one individual at a time. Voting shall be by personally-identifiable ballot made available at every service for a one-week period. An affirmative vote of 90% of counted, verified ballots cast by members present is necessary for appointment. The Pastor, thus called, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or the Church's request.

Section 5. Trustees

Three Trustees, one third of whom shall be elected annually to serve for three years, and, until their successors shall be appointed, will hold in trust the property of the Church. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without a specific vote of the Church authorizing each action. It shall be the function of the Trustees to affix their signatures to legal documents involving the sale, mortgaging, purchase or rental of property or other legal documents where the signatures of Trustees are required.

Section 6. Ministerial Staff

This Church shall call or employ such staff members as needed. Job descriptions shall be developed when the need for staff members is determined. Employment decisions for ministerial and other Church staff, be they part-time or full-time, are recommended by the personnel team and finance team and are approved by the Elders.

VII. Ministry Teams

Section 1. General

Team chairpersons are elected by the Church to serve a one-year term. In addition, the Church elects all members of the finance team and personnel team, who shall serve on a three-year rotation system with one third to be elected each year. Elders will bring respective candidates for Team votes. For all other teams described below, membership shall be self-perpetuating, which allows team chairs and members to recruit and train new members as needed. Each year following elections, there will be a time for team chairperson training, which will include effective leadership strategies, position duties, working with team members about involvement and discussing commitment, and so forth.

Section 2. Prayer Team

The prayer team helps coordinate the various prayer ministries and corporate prayer gatherings conducted through the Church, and helps communicate prayer needs and opportunities. This team will help promote a "House of Prayer" mentality at the Church, encouraging all attendees and members in developing and growing lives of prayer.

Section 3. Baptism Team

The baptism team assists the Pastor(s) in preparing for the ordinance of baptism. The team is responsible for preparing the candidates and the baptistry for the ordinance.

Section 4. Personnel Team

Comprised of seven members, the personnel team assists the Church in matters related to employed personnel administration. Its work includes such areas as staff needs, employment, salaries, benefits, and personnel services. The team also establishes and updates position descriptions and personnel policies and makes recommendations about salaries to the finance team.

Section 5. Facilities Team

The facilities team assists the Church in matters related to building maintenance and administration. Its work includes such areas as maintaining all Church facilities for ready use, recommending policies regarding use of facilities, recommending employment of maintenance personnel and assigning responsibility to appropriate personnel for supervision. This team researches and recommends necessary facility expenditures to the staff and finance team.

Section 6. Grounds Team

The grounds team assists the Church in matters related to maintaining non-

building Church property. Its work includes such areas as lawn and garden care, parking lot maintenance, and general exterior upkeep and beautification. This team researches and recommends grounds-related expenditures to the staff and finance team.

Section 7. Finance Team

Comprised of seven members, the finance team develops and recommends an overall stewardship information plan, and administers the gifts of Church members, using sound principles of financial management. This team develops the annual operating budget with input from the staff, members, teams, and Elders.

Section 8. Missions Team

The missions team seeks to discover possibilities for local, regional, national, and international missions projects, shares findings with Church organizations and serves the Church in establishing and conducting such missions projects as may be assigned to it.

Section 9. Hospitality Team

The hospitality team has the responsibility of preparation for any event or group visiting our Church and shall give direction to the Church ministry as it seeks to minister to those experiencing sorrow or bereavement.

Section 10. Special Teams

The special teams are not standing teams but are established as required to accomplish specific functions.

VIII. Educational Ministries

Section 1. General

All educational ministries of the Church shall be approved by the Elders, and shall keep the Church abreast of needs and opportunities. These ministries shall function under the direction of the education Pastor or another pastor. It is understood that the supervising pastor is an ex-officio member of all the organizations named, and his leadership is to be recognized in them.

Section 2. Life Connection

There shall be a Life Connection program, divided into departments and classes for all ages and conducted under the direction of a class director for the study of God's Word. Life Connection is to be conducted each Sunday morning unless the Church staff and Elders cancel Life Connection classes based on attendance expectations around major holidays and/or special Sunday morning events. As Church membership grows, Life Connection delivery may also extend in other

group formats and may occur on any day of the week.

The tasks of Life Connection shall be to teach the biblical revelation; lead in reaching all prospects for the Church; lead all Church members to worship, witness, learn, and minister daily; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the Church.

Section 3. Discovering Church Membership

All adults seeking membership in the Church shall, upon expressing interest in joining the Church through one of the means outlined in these Bylaws, attend a class entitled, Discovering Church Membership, or a similarly named class led by the Elders/Pastor(s). The purpose of the class is to help prospective members understand the Church's beliefs, expectations, goals, history, polity, and structure.

Section 4. Men's Ministry

The Southside Church Men's Ministry is dedicated to inspiring men to develop a Christ-like character, empowering and deploying them in Christian service to their family, Church, and community, for God's glory.

Section 5. Women's Ministry

The Southside Church Women's Ministry seeks to involve the women of Southside Church in personal spiritual development, thereby empowering them to meet the emotional, spiritual, and physical needs of themselves, their families, and other women.

Section 6. Other Ministries

Other Church ministries may be established as needs arise or special callings lead members to start new ministries. All such ministries must be reviewed by the Elders/Pastor(s) prior to approval or association with the Church.

IX. Church Gatherings & Meetings

Section 1. Worship Services

The Church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning and evening--and at other times as attendance needs dictate--for preaching, instruction, evangelism, and for the worship of Almighty God and on Wednesday evening for prayer. These meetings will be open for all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the Pastor(s).

Section 2. Quarterly Business Meetings

Quarterly business meetings shall be held on a designated Wednesday night announced to the membership at least one week prior to the meeting.

Section 3. Special Business Meetings

Called business meetings may be held to consider matters of a significant nature. A two-week notice must be given for the specially called business meeting, unless extreme urgency renders such notice impracticable. Called business meetings must be approved by the Elders.

Section 4. Quorum

The quorum consists of those members who attend the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called.

Section 5. Parliamentary Rules

Robert's Rules of Order Revised is adopted as the general guideline of parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the Church.

Section 6. Records

A member of the Elders or a designee will take minutes at official Church meetings, which will be typed for reading and approval at the next called or scheduled Church meeting.

Section 7. Moderator

The moderator during Church business meetings shall be the Pastor, who has the option of passing this authority to a member of the Elders/Pastor(s).

Section 8. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Church shall begin on September 1 and end on August 31.

X. Church Finances

Section 1.

The finance team, in consultation with the Elders, shall prepare and submit to the Church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by items the amount needed for all local and worldwide expenses. The finance team will establish a budget development timeline with expected submission deadlines from Pastors and all teams so the budget may be adequately developed.

Section 2.

The financial administrator is responsible for maintaining all financial records of the Church, including contributions and disbursements. For a complete position description, see Appendix X.

Section 3.

All funds, for any and all purposes, shall pass through the hands of the financial administrator and be properly recorded on the books of the Church.

Section 4.

It is understood that membership in this Church involves financial obligation to support the Church and its causes with regular tithes and offerings.

XI. Discipline

Section 1.

Should any significant conflict arise among members, the aggrieved member shall follow, in a tender spirit, the guidelines found in Matthew 18.

Section 2.

Should any case of gross breach of covenant, or of public scandal, occur, the Elders shall endeavor to address and remove the offense; and if this effort fails, shall report the case to the Church.

Section 3.

All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance, but should an adverse decision be reached, the Elders may proceed to admonish or declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the Church.

Section 4.

Any member who contests in Civil Court any decision made by the Church in a business meeting will be automatically excluded from the membership of the church immediately upon verification of the civil suit by the Trustees.

Section 5.

Any person whose membership has been terminated for any offense may be restored by favorable consensus of the Elders, upon evidence of his repentance and reformation.

XII. Amendments

Changes to this Constitution and Bylaws may be made at any regular business meeting of the church, provided such amendments have been presented in writing at a previous meeting, and copies of the proposed amendment be furnished to each member present. Amendments to the Constitution shall be by two-thirds vote of all members of the church present entitled to vote; amendments to the Bylaws shall have a concurrence of a majority of the members present and voting.

Appendix A

All scripture references are from the New International Version and are presented in order of appearance from the Southside Church Bylaws.

Matthew 28:18-20

¹⁸Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Acts 6:3-4

³Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them ⁴and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."

Acts 20:28-31

²⁸Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. ²⁹I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. ³⁰Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. ³¹So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.

1 Corinthians 4:14-16

¹⁴I am not writing this to shame you, but to warn you, as my dear children. ¹⁵Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. ¹⁶Therefore I urge you to imitate me.

1 Timothy 3:1-7

¹Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. ²Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. ⁵(If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) ⁶He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. ⁷He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

1 Timothy 5:17

¹⁷The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.

Hebrews 13:7

⁷Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.

1 Peter 5:1-5

¹To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: ²Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; ³not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. ⁴And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away. ⁵Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God

opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

Acts 15:1-22

¹Some men came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the brothers: "Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved." ²This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question. ³The church sent them on their way, and as they traveled through Phoenicia and Samaria, they told how the Gentiles had been converted. This news made all the brothers very glad. ⁴When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and elders, to whom they reported everything God had done through them. ⁵Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, "The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses." ⁶The apostles and elders met to consider this question. ⁷After much discussion, Peter got up and addressed them: "Brothers, you know that some time ago God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe. ⁸God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. ⁹He made no distinction between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith. ¹⁰Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of the disciples a yoke that neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear? ¹¹No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are." ¹²The whole assembly became silent as they listened to Barnabas and Paul telling about the miraculous signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them. ¹³When they finished, James spoke up: "Brothers, listen to me. ¹⁴Simon has described to us how God at first showed his concern by taking from the Gentiles a people for himself. ¹⁵The words of the prophets are in agreement with this, as it is written:

¹⁶" 'After this I will return

and rebuild David's fallen tent.

Its ruins I will rebuild,

and I will restore it,

¹⁷that the remnant of men may seek the Lord,

and all the Gentiles who bear my name,

says the Lord, who does these things'

¹⁸that have been known for ages.

¹⁹"It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God. ²⁰Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood. ²¹For Moses has been preached in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues on every Sabbath." ²²Then the apostles and elders, with the whole church, decided to choose some of their own men and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They chose Judas (called Barsabbas) and Silas, two men who were leaders among the brothers.

Acts 21:17-26

¹⁷When we arrived at Jerusalem, the brothers received us warmly. ¹⁸The next day Paul and the rest of us went to see James, and all the elders were present. ¹⁹Paul greeted them and reported in detail what God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. ²⁰When they heard this, they praised God. Then they said to Paul: "You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews have believed, and all of them are zealous for the law. ²¹They have been informed that you teach all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to turn away from Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or live according to our customs. ²²What shall we do? They will certainly hear that you have come, ²³so do what we tell you. There are four men with us who have made a vow. ²⁴Take these men, join in their purification rites and pay their expenses, so that they can have their heads shaved. Then everybody will know there is no truth in these reports about you, but that you yourself are living in obedience to the law. ²⁵As for the Gentile believers, we have written to them our decision that they should abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality." ²⁶The next day Paul took the men and purified himself along with them. Then he went to the temple to give notice

of the date when the days of purification would end and the offering would be made for each of them.

James 5:13-15

¹³Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise. ¹⁴Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven.

Acts 14:23

²³Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.

Acts 20:17-28

¹⁷From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church. ¹⁸When they arrived, he said to them: "You know how I lived the whole time I was with you, from the first day I came into the province of Asia. ¹⁹I served the Lord with great humility and with tears, although I was severely tested by the plots of the Jews. ²⁰You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house. ²¹I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus. ²²"And now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there. ²³I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me. ²⁴However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace. ²⁵"Now I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will ever see me again. ²⁶Therefore, I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood of all men. ²⁷For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God. ²⁸Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

¹²Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. ¹³Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other.

Philippians 1:1

¹Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons:

Hebrews 13:17

¹⁷Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

Titus 1:5-9

⁵The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. ⁶An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. ⁷Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. ⁸Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. ⁹He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

1 Timothy 2:9-15

⁹I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, ¹⁰but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess

to worship God.

¹¹A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. ¹²I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent. ¹³For Adam was formed first, then Eve.

¹⁴And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. ¹⁵But women will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.

1 Timothy 4:14

¹⁴Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you.

1 Timothy 5:17-18

¹⁷The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. ¹⁸For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain," and "The worker deserves his wages."

1 Timothy 5:19-25

¹⁹Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses.

²⁰Those who sin are to be rebuked publicly, so that the others may take warning. ²¹I charge you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism. ²²Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure. ²³Stop drinking only water, and use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses. ²⁴The sins of some men are obvious, reaching the place of judgment ahead of them; the sins of others trail behind them.

²⁵In the same way, good deeds are obvious, and even those that are not cannot be hidden.

Matthew 18

¹At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

²He called a little child and had him stand among them. ³And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

⁴Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

⁵"And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me. ⁶But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

⁷"Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to sin! Such things must come, but woe to the man through whom they come! ⁸If your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire. ⁹And if your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell.

¹⁰"See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.

¹²"What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? ¹³And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. ¹⁴In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost.

¹⁵"If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. ¹⁶But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' ¹⁷If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

¹⁸"I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

¹⁹"Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done

for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."

²¹Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?"

²²Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

²³"Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. ²⁵Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

²⁶"The servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' ²⁷The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

²⁸"But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded.

²⁹"His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.'

³⁰"But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. ³¹When the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened.

³²"Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. ³³Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' ³⁴In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

³⁵"This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart."

Acts 8:5-7

⁵Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there. ⁶When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said.

⁷With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were healed.

Acts 6:9

⁹Opposition arose, however, from members of the Synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called)—Jews of Cyrene and Alexandria as well as the provinces of Cilicia and Asia. These men began to argue with Stephen,

Acts 6:5

⁵This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism.

Acts 6:8

⁸Now Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, did great wonders and miraculous signs among the people.

1 Timothy 3:8-11

⁸Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. ⁹They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. ¹⁰They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons.

¹¹In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything.

1 Timothy 3:12

¹²A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well.