

CONSTITUTION

Revised and Approved 2/11/00; 7/22/11 at Church Conference

PREAMBLE

We declare and establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the body in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual Church member and the freedom of action of this body in relation to other churches.

Article I. NAME

This body shall be known as the Baptist Union Baptist Church located at 125 Baptist Union Road, Dillwyn, Virginia 23936.

Article II. PURPOSE

Our purpose is to glorify God by conducting a Baptist Church in accordance with the Word of God, the Articles of Faith, the Covenant and the Constitution of this local church, promoting the Worship of God, edifying believers, teaching the whole counsel of God, administering the ordinances and Biblical discipline, seeking to win the lost to Christ through personal witnessing and the preaching of the Gospel, carrying on a vigorous missionary program around the world and our church community by Godliness and good works.

Article III. DOCTRINE

The Church adopts the Articles of Faith set forth in the Church Covenant as an expression of the essential doctrines of grace as set forth in the scriptures.

The Articles of Faith may be revised by the church as new insights from the Scriptures indicate ways in which our faith and life may be brought into closer accord with the teaching of scriptures.

We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired Word of God and the basic for our beliefs. We voluntarily 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 Believer's, Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Article IV. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist Church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church.

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

Membership on the Ministries and in the Organizations of the Church is reserved for those who are members of the Church.

Article IV. MEMBERSHIP (continued)

Section 2: CANDIDACY

Any person may offer himself / herself as a candidate for membership in this Church. All such candidates shall be presented to the Church at any Church service for membership in any of the following ways:

1. **BAPTISM:** By Profession of Faith and for Baptism according to the policies of this Church.
 - 1a. Candidates for Baptism shall be counseled by the pastor. The pastor shall recommend them to the church for acceptance, and upon their acceptance by the church; there should be counseling with the pastor which discusses the importance of the Articles of the Church Covenant before they shall be baptized by immersion at a time designated by the Pastor and Church.
 - 1b. This act of Baptism followed by the giving of the Hand of Fellowship, shall entitle the candidate to all the rights and privileges of membership in the Church.
2. **LETTER:** By letter of recommendation from another Church that Baptizes in The name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost and partakes in Holy Communion.
3. **CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE:** By a statement of prior conversion experience And Baptism in a Church that Baptizes in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost and partakes in Holy Communion.
4. **REINSTATEMENT:** By restoring the previous membership in the Church Though a statement of Christian faith.

SPECIAL NOTE: should there be any dissent as to any candidate becoming a member, such dissent shall be referred to the Ministry of Deacons. The Deacons will investigate and make a recommendation to the Church within thirty **(30)** days. After such dissent for membership a two-third vote of those church members present and voting shall be required to elect such candidate to membership.

Section 3: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

1. Every member of the Church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the Church in conference provided the member is present.
2. Every member of the Church is entitled for consideration by the membership as candidates for elective offices of the Church.
3. Every member of the Church may participate in the ordinances of the Church as administered by the church. (BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER).

Section 3: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS (continued)

4. It is requested that each new member participate in a recommended period of study.
5. All members are expected to remain in good standing by contributing to the financial support by envelope to promote the influence, progress and growth of Baptist Union.
6. These rights and responsibilities are afforded to members in good standing who contribute financially at least quarterly and attend church services regularly.

Section 4: TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

1. Death of member.
2. Dismissal to another Church
3. Exclusion by action of this Church (see section on due process rights)
4. Erasure upon request or proof of membership in a Church of another denomination.
5. Erasure due to inexcusable absence from participation in the life of the Church for a period of six (6) months
6. Any member of good standing shall be entitled to ask for a letter of dismissal to unite with another Church
7. Notification of erasure shall be completed by the Church clerk by letter within fifteen (15) days of the elapsed time period

Section 5: DUE PROCESS RIGHTS

It shall be the practice of this Church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The Pastor is available for counsel and guidance. The attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption rather than punishment.

Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the Church, the Pastor and Deacons will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accord with Matthew 18: 15-20.

If it becomes necessary for the Church to take action, to exclude a member, a two-third (2\3) vote of the members present is required; and the Church may proceed to declare the person to be no longer in the membership of the Church. A spirit of Christian kindness and mercy shall spread through all such proceedings.

Section 5: DUE PROCESS RIGHTS (continued)

The Church may restore to membership any person excluded, upon request of the excluded person, and by vote of the Church upon evidence of the excluded person's repentance and reformation.

Article V. PASTOR, CHURCH OFFICERS

All who serves, as officers of the Church and those who serve on Church Committees shall be members of this Church.

Section 1: THE PASTOR

The Pastor shall be the leader of the Church in all of its activities and shall preach the gospel, administer the ordinances, have charge of the stated services of public worship, and direct the spiritual welfare of the Church. He shall be an ex-officio member of all Ministries, committees, and auxiliary organizations of the Church.

MODERATOR: The pastor shall be moderator of all business meetings except when conflict of interest dictates otherwise. In the absence of the pastor, the chairman of the deacon ministry shall be the moderator.

The Moderator shall:

1. Open and preside over the meeting of the Church.
2. Announce the business before the Church in the order in which it is to be acted upon.
3. Appoint Special Committees of the Church not otherwise provided for in this Constitution. The moderator may appoint the chairman of each such Special Committee.
4. The moderator shall chair any hearing under this Constitution in which he is to act in an official capacity.

CALLING A PASTOR: When the Pastorate is vacant, the Deacons Ministry shall be responsible for appointing a Search Committee of seven (7) members, four (4) of which must be members-at-large to represent the membership. This committee shall take the necessary steps to secure the name of perspective pastors. Any member of the church has the privilege of entering a minister's name for consideration. The committee shall secure information and qualifications of the persons being submitted. As part of the selection process, the candidates shall have the opportunity to serve in the Pulpit as requested by the committee.

A Search Committee shall be responsible for gathering resumes and researching professional and personal backgrounds of prospective Pastors for the Church. Upon agreement of such individuals as a possible Pastor by that committee, the committee will propose those candidates to the church membership.

Article V. PASTOR, CHURCH OFFICERS (Continued)

CALLING A PASTOR: The call of a pastor shall be considered by the church at a special call meeting. Notice of such meeting and its purpose must be read from the pulpit and included in the church bulletin on two (2) successive Sundays. A vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and qualified to vote shall be necessary to extent a call to the person recommended by the Pulpit Committee. If not elected, then call a meeting to vote on the second person, etc. We only vote on one (1) person at each meeting.

TERMINATION OF PASTORATE: The term of office may be ended upon thirty (30) days notice on the part of the Pastor or of the church. Termination of the office shall be voted at a specially called meeting, notice of such meeting and its purpose must be read from the pulpit and included in the Church Bulletin on three (3) successive Sundays. A vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and qualified to vote shall make valid termination of said office.

Section 2: THE DEACONS MINISTRY

There shall be a Deacons Ministry elected by the Church. The officers of the Deacons Ministry, shall be the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary shall be chosen every two (2) years.

The chairman shall preside over all meetings of the Deacons Ministry and appoint all standing committees of the Deacons Ministry.

TRIAL DEACONS: The Church by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of members present may place a Person on Trial for the office of Deacon provided that person is:

1. A member of the Church
2. Recommended to the Church by the Pastor and Nominating Committee
3. Presented to the Church at least two (2) consecutive Sundays prior to the business meeting in which the voting on that person becoming a Trail Deacon will take place.

A person placed on trial will receive training for the office of Deacon. The Pastor and Deacons Ministry shall determine the type and method of training the person will receive.

ORDINATION OF DEACON: The Church by two-thirds (2/3) vote may approve the Ordination of a person for the office of Deacon provided:

1. The person has been a Trail Deacon for a minimum of twelve (12) months
2. The Pastor and Deacon Ministry recommends to the Church that the person be Ordained.

DEACON EMERITUS: Upon experiencing a debilitating infirmity (disability), or at their request, a Deacon may be designated as Deacon Emeritus by two-third (2/3) majority vote of the Church. Deacon Emeritus shall be exempt from the duties of active Deacons, but may continue to assist the Pastor in any capacity the Pastor or Church may request.

Section 2: THE DEACONS MINISTRY (Continued)

New members of this Church who are recognized as Ordained Deacon in good standing of another Church shall be nominated by the Deacons Ministry of this Church and voted upon by the Church at a regular Church meeting announced two (2) Sundays prior to that meeting. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of those Church members present and voting shall be required to elect them to the Deacons Ministry. Such person (s) shall be Church members a minimum of two (2) months prior to being nominated to the Deacons Ministry. The Pastor and Deacons Ministry will determine and provide the type and method of training the person (s) will receive.

The Deacon Ministry shall promote Christian instruction and minister to the Church membership provide for the Lord's Supper and aid in its administration; and make a written report at each annual meeting of the Church on the matters in its charge.

Whenever a vacancy occurs in the Pastorate, the Deacons Ministry Chairman shall be considered the official head of the Church until a new Pastor is installed.

In the absence of the Pastor, the Deacons Ministry Chairman shall be the head of the Church and moderator of congregational meetings.

Section 3: THE TRUSTEE MINISTRY

There shall be a Trustee Ministry elected by the Church. The Trustee Ministry shall meet regularly each month, and shall choose annually a Chairman, Co-Chairman and a Secretary. Special meeting may be called by the chairman or co-chairman who shall notify the other members. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum. The Clerk and Financial Secretary shall have the privilege of attending meetings of this Ministry, and shall be present when so requested by the Trustee Ministry. The Trustee Ministry shall consist of eleven (11) members.

The Trustee Ministry shall hold in trust all property and assets belonging to the Church and shall take all necessary measures for its protection, management and safe upkeep. The Trustee Ministry shall determine the use of the church building by outside groups and shall determine suitable charges to be made for such use. The Trustee Ministry shall have no power to buy, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property, or commit the Church assets without specific vote of the Church authorizing such action.

The Trustee Ministry shall designate the bank where the funds of the church shall be deposited and the method of deposit. The Trustee Ministry shall secure the services of a caretaker of the building at such salary as is authorized by the church and supervise these services. The Trustee Ministry shall transact all legal matters on behalf of the church. They shall make written reports to the church at the annual meeting, and at such other times as may be desired.

Section 3: THE TRUSTEE MINISTRY (continued)

The chairman shall preside over all meetings of the Trustee Ministry and appoint all Standing Committees of the ministry.

To maintain the authorized strength of eleven (11) trustee members, all vacancies are to be filled within ninety (90) days of occurrence.

Section 4: TREASURER

The treasurer shall be elected at each annual meeting to serve for one year. The treasurer shall have custody of the funds of the church and all deposits made in the name of the church, and all checks drawn by the treasurer shall be in the name of the Church.

The church treasurer shall be bonded in an amount that exceed that which is entrusted to his / her keeping due to funds received for the support of the Church, and for the reduction in accordance with the Church Constitution and budget.

The treasurer shall present to the church an itemized report of disbursements and expenditures, showing the actual financial condition of the church at each meeting. The report shall be submitted for audit. The treasurer shall make such other financial reports as may be desired by the church.

It shall be the church treasurer's duty to furnish each member of the church a pledge card and envelopes for contribution to remain in good standing.

The treasurer shall deliver immediately to their successor all books and records pertaining to this office.

The treasurer will assume the duties of the financial secretary in the absence of that person.

Section 5: FINANCIAL SECRETARY

A financial Secretary shall be elected at each annual meeting to serve for one year. It shall be the financial secretary's duty to keep records of all pledges made; to document all monies contributed; and to keep a correct account thereof between the church and its members. The financial secretary, at each meeting, shall report to the church an account of the total funds collected. The financial secretary shall report quarterly to the Deacon Ministry the names of those members who have failed the requirement of good standing.

The Financial Secretary shall also be responsible for providing each member with his or her individual records for the year.

Section 6: RECORDING SECRETARY / CLERK

A recording secretary shall be elected at each annual meeting to serve for one year. This person shall keep a complete record of the transactions of all business at the meetings of the church. These recordings shall be read for approval at the next business meeting, or approval by the membership from minutes passed out prior to the meeting.

The recording secretary shall keep a record of the names and addresses of members, with dates and manner of admission and dismissal; also a record of baptisms and a list of those suspended, or erased. The recording secretary shall notify all officers, committee members and delegates of their election and appointment. The recording secretary shall issue letters of dismissal and recommendation voted by the church, preserve on file all communications and written reports, and give legal notice of all such meetings where such is required by this constitution and by-laws.

The recording secretary shall also assist in preparing all reports, serve as a purchasing agent at the Baptist Book Store and is the official correspondent for the church.

The recording secretary may be elected to serve an unlimited number of terms, and upon resignation or a vote by the church to dismiss, shall immediately, after election of a successor, deliver to the new recording secretary / clerk all books and records.

Section 7: BULLETIN EDITOR

The bulletin editor shall be responsible for preparing bulletins for all services and assist in preparing reports. The bulletin editor shall receive a salary as set by the church, and be supervised by the pastor.

Article VI. STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1: AUDITING COMMITTEE

The auditing committee elected by the church, shall audit the financial records of the church at least once each year and make a report in writing to the church at the annual meeting.

Section 2: AD-HOC COMMITTEES

These committees shall be considered a special committee and not a "standing committee." These committees shall be appointed as the need arises and shall serve only for the specific purpose, case or situation appointed. Once the responsibilities/duties have been performed or carried out, the committee shall cease to exist.

Article VII. CHURCH FINANCES

Section 1: BUDGET

The Budget Committee, consisting of the pastor, representatives from the Deacons Ministry, Trustees Ministry, of each organization and other representative members of the congregation, shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by items the amount needed and sought for all local and other expenses. (Offering envelopes will be provided for members use.)

Section 2: ACCOUNTING POLICY

All funds received for any and all purposes shall be the properly recorded on the books by the church treasurer and financial secretary. Those who have responsibility that involves actual handling of funds shall be bonded.

It shall be the responsibility of the Trustee Ministry to develop a system of accounting that will adequately provide for the processing of all funds received by the church and ensure the implementation.

Section 3: FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the church shall be the calendar year.

Article VIII. CHURCH MEETINGS

Section 1: WORSHIP SERVICES

Public Worship Service and Church Sunday school shall be held each Sunday morning. Sunday Afternoon / Evening and Wednesday Evening Service shall be held at the discretion of the pastor and members.

Section 2: SPECIAL SERVICES

Revival Services and any other church meetings essential to the advancement of the church's objectives shall be placed on the church calendar.

Section 3: REGULAR BUSINESS MEETINGS

The church shall hold regular business meetings quarterly.

All organization officers are requested to attend all business meetings.

The annual meeting shall be the December meeting.

Article VIII. CHURCH MEETINGS (continued)

Section 4: SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS

The church may conduct called business meetings to consider matters of special nature and significance. A one (1) week notice must be given before the specially called business meeting unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical. The notice shall include the subject, the date, time and place, and must be given in such a manner that all resident members have the opportunity to know of the meeting.

Section 5: QUORUM

The quorum consists of at least ten percent of the church membership attending the business meeting.

Section 6: PARLIAMENTARY RULES

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedures for all business meetings of the church.

Article IX. CHURCH FUNERALS

Section 1:

All members of the church are entitle to a funeral service and can expected to be buried in the church cemetery.

Section 2:

Non church member, with approval of the Trustee Ministry, will be required to pay the amount of \$200.00 (Two hundred dollars) per plot and must meet all burial requirements.

Section 3:

A liner will be required in the church cemetery.

Article X. AMENDMENTS

Changes in the constitution and by-laws may be made at any regular business meeting of the church provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous business meeting and copies of the proposed amendment shall have been furnished to each member present at the earlier meeting. Amendments to the constitution shall be by two-thirds vote of church members present.

Respectfully Submitted
By-Law Committee:

Douglas Gregory, Moderator

Bruce Robinson, Chairman

Thomas Hutcherson

Thelma Jones

Sam Matthews

Geraldine Scruggs

Joyce G. Wilson