



VALLEYDALE CHURCH

Constitution and Bylaws

September 17, 2023 Revised

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VALLEYDALE CHURCH CONSTITUTION

We declare and establish this Constitution for the preservation of our faith and for the orderly government of this body commonly called Valleydale Church.

ARTICLE I - NAME

This Church is incorporated under the name of Valleydale Baptist Church, Inc., but the activities of this Church generally will be carried on in the name of Valleydale Church, sometimes hereinafter referred to as "Church."

ARTICLE II - MISSION STATEMENT and BELIEFS

The Mission Statement of Valleydale Church is the basis and purpose for which all activities, programs, and decisions are made. That statement is as follows:

"Generations helping our busy Community Know Christ and Live for Him."

Statement of Beliefs

1. We, the members of Valleydale Church in Birmingham, Alabama, believe in the one true and living God, creator of all things, almighty, and sovereign in the universe.
2. We believe that He is a three-person God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. We believe that He has revealed Himself generally through His Creation and Moral Law and specifically through His own voice, the incarnation of His Son, and His written word, the Bible.
4. We believe that the Bible is the inspired, inerrant, infallible, and authoritative word of God.
5. We believe that all things God created were good but that mankind freely sinned against God and in that sin fell from God's perfection.
6. We believe that sinful man stands opposed to God and in that sin faces the eternal, just wrath of the Almighty God.
7. We believe that God is a gracious God and that He has extended His grace to sinful man through His Son Jesus Christ.
8. We believe that Christ the Son, though being fully God, became fully man, being born of a virgin.
9. We believe that Jesus Christ lived on earth and, though He was tempted in every way, did not sin and lived in perfect accordance to the will of the Father.
10. We believe that Jesus was betrayed and was crucified on a Roman cross.
11. We believe that in this crucifixion, Christ the Son took on the full weight of the Father's wrath against the sinfulness of man and became the atoning sacrifice for all who believe in Him.
12. We believe that Christ died and was buried, but after three days He was raised from the dead to live and to reign over heaven and earth.
13. We believe that after His resurrection He met with His disciples, commissioned His church, and ascended into heaven, from where He reigns and is building His Kingdom.
14. We believe that the church is the presence of the Kingdom of Christ on earth.
15. We believe that followers of Jesus are indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God who is the third person of the Trinity and who strengthens believers to grow in holiness and in obedience to the commands of Christ.

16. We believe that God's gift of grace and forgiveness of sin is available to all who have faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord.
17. We believe that this offer of grace is exclusive only to those who confess and believe in the Lordship and saving work of Jesus Christ. Therefore, we believe in the Great Commission and that we are charged by Christ to make disciples.
18. We believe that followers of Christ join together in localized bodies or local churches in order to live out the life of a disciple.
19. We believe in baptism by immersion in water as a proclamation of faith and an experience of fellowship with Christ in his death and resurrection.
20. We believe in the observation of the Lord's Supper as a proclamation of Christ's work and Kingdom until He returns.
21. We believe that Christ will return to establish fully His authority over all things.
22. We believe that Christ will judge all of humanity and condemn all evil and that He will call those who have believed in Him to life in His everlasting Kingdom.

Statement on Marriage and Sexuality

We believe the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 2:18-25). We believe that marriage between one man and one woman, for life, uniquely reflects Christ's relationship with His Church (Eph. 5:21-33). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

Valleydale Church believes that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary sexes together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including but not limited to, adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, or use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt. 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 6:9-10).

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Valleydale Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to Valleydale Church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Valleydale Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thess 5:22).

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11).

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Valleydale Church.

Statement on the Sanctity of Human Life

Valleydale Church believes that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception

through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Ps. 139.)

Statement of Final Authority

Final Authority for Matters of Belief and Conduct:

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Valleydale Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Senior Pastor and Board of Elders are Valleydale's final interpretive authority on the Bible's application.

ARTICLE III - CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led by the Spirit of God to accept Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord and having entered into the fellowship of His church, we prayerfully and joyfully make this covenant with one another and with Him.

1. We covenant together to Make Jesus Known and Make Disciples, affirming our Statement of Beliefs.
2. We commit to worship God corporately, and to pursue God devotionally both in private and with our families. We will not forsake this worship, but commit to pursue God regularly, sacrificially, generously, and with humility. We further commit to urge one another to be faithful in participating in the various components of worship; declarations of praise, sincere prayer, cheerful giving, and right living before the sovereign God of the universe.
3. We commit to connect with one another in sincere community, therefore we commit to join together in groups focused on biblical truth, intentional community, and disciple making. We commit to pray for one another, care for one another, and meet the needs of one another, always pursuing reconciliation and Church unity. Together, we commit to study God's word, teach one another God's truth, and urge one another to live out this truth. We further commit to connect with unbelievers for the sake of the advancement of the gospel.
4. We commit to use the gifts that God has given us to advance His Kingdom. Therefore, we commit to find a place to serve, whereby we can take part in building the Kingdom of Christ cheerfully, readily, and sacrificially in the Church, in our community, and even to the ends of the earth.
5. We submit to biblical authority, and to the authority of the congregation, and to the instruction, care, and discipline of the elders.
6. Finally, should we ever leave this church we commit to resign from this body and as soon as possible join another gospel centered, biblically driven church.

We make all of these commitments by the grace of Lord Jesus Christ, with his help, and for his glory.

ARTICLE IV - GOVERNMENT

The government of this Church is vested in the body of believers (members) who comprise it. This is an autonomous and democratic Baptist church operating under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the importance of mutual counsel and cooperation.

ARTICLE V - AFFILIATION

This church shall be a cooperating member of the Birmingham Baptist Association, the Alabama Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention. Valleydale Church is in full agreement with the Baptist Faith and Message, 2000.

ARTICLE VI - AMENDMENT PROCEDURE

Changes to this Constitution may be made at any Church business meeting, provided that a copy of each amendment is made available to Church members in writing at least one month before the meeting. Amendments to this Constitution shall have the concurrence of two-thirds of the members who are present and voting.

VALLEYDALE CHURCH BYLAWS

These bylaws establish structure and policy for Valleydale Church. The Church may adopt other policies or statements not included in these bylaws at any Church business meeting with a two-thirds vote of affirmation from members present and voting at that meeting. For example, the Church may adopt a building usage policy, or a theological position statement as an official policy or position of Valleydale Church.

ARTICLE I - MEMBERSHIP

SECTION I – GENERAL

The membership of Valleydale Church retains unto itself the right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this Church.

SECTION II – REQUEST FOR MEMBERSHIP

A person may come forward and be presented as a candidate for membership at any organized event of the Church. Persons in any of the following categories are eligible for membership in the Body of Christ known as the Valleydale Church:

1. Those who make an initial profession of personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and come for baptism;
2. Those who transfer their letter from another Southern Baptist Church;
3. Those Christian believers who have been baptized by immersion and who come by statement of their salvation experience;
4. Those Christians from another denomination who come for baptism by immersion as a witness to their understanding of and adherence to Baptist beliefs and doctrines; and
5. Those who make a profession of faith but for whom baptism might prove physically harmful.

SECTION III - PROCESS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Before being accepted as members, all candidates for membership shall:

1. Attend a membership class.
2. Meet with an elder, a member of the pastoral staff, or their designee to discuss Church membership.
3. Sign a membership agreement that they have read and agree to and submit to the Church Covenant and Baptist and Faith Message, 2000, and the Church Constitution and Bylaws.

Then, at a following business meeting, the Elders or representative will present prospective members to the Church for affirmation or denial and record.

SECTION IV - DUTIES OF MEMBERS

Members of the Church shall be committed to the mission, beliefs, and Covenant of the Church.

SECTION V – PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERS

1. Protection – The Church member finds greater protection from theological error and sin through discipleship, through Church discipline, and by coming under the leadership of Church Pastors and Elders.
2. Commitment – The mutual commitment between the member and the Church body provides a deeper level of community and a greater opportunity for growth in Christian spirituality.
3. Mission – The member will find greater effectiveness in advancing the Kingdom of Christ as a part of a church body than he or she will individually.
4. Assurance – To be accepted for membership is an affirmation by the Church of the member's salvation.
5. Voting – Each Church member that is present during Church business meetings is entitled to vote in accordance with the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

SECTION VI - TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be terminated by the following:

1. Death of the member;
2. Transfer of membership to another Baptist church or church of another denomination or faith;
3. Exclusion by discipline of the Church for unrepentant sin, which will be administered by the Elders following the Biblical guidelines of Matthew 18:15-22 with the hope of repentance and restoration to the Church body; or
4. If the member expresses a desire to be removed as a member, then the member shall be removed from the Church roll.

ARTICLE II - CHURCH STAFF

SECTION I – SENIOR PASTOR

Duties and Responsibilities:

The duties and responsibilities of the Senior Pastor shall be stated in the position description approved by the Church and included in the Personnel Section of the Policies and Procedures Manual. He shall be an *ex officio* non-voting member of all committees. He shall serve as Chairman of the Elders with all rights and shall serve as teaching Elder of the Church.

Selection and Call:

In the event of a vacancy in the office of Senior Pastor, the Elders shall receive nominations from the Church and from those nominations appoint a Pastor Search Committee. The Elders shall present to the Church the names of the members of the Pastor Search Committee. This committee shall seek out and recommend to the Elders, who shall then recommend to the Church, a person whose qualifications have been examined and are found to fit the needs of the Church. The Elders will guide the process with the committee, providing regular updates for elder consideration.

The call of the Senior Pastor shall take place at a special, called business meeting. The extension of a call shall be made upon an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting at this meeting.

Interim Leadership:

The Elders shall be responsible for assigning the duties and responsibilities of the Senior Pastor until an Interim Pastor or a new Senior Pastor has started.

SECTION II – ADDITIONAL PASTORAL STAFF

Other Pastoral staff may be called to assist the Senior Pastor in advancing the mission of the Church. The establishment and calling of additional pastoral staff positions shall be approved and recommended to the Church by the Personnel Committee and Elders.

SECTION III – PROGRAM, ADMINISTRATIVE, AND SUPPORT STAFF

To help advance the mission of the Church, additional staff may be called to provide miscellaneous support, administration, or program development. The establishment of additional program, administrative, and support staff positions shall be approved by the Personnel Committee and Elders, typically on an annual basis.

SECTION IV – HIRING AND TERMINATING

Job descriptions and procedures for calling, hiring, and terminating are found in the Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual.

ARTICLE III - CHURCH OFFICERS

SECTION I - CHURCH ELDERS

General:

While fully recognizing and believing that Jesus Christ is the head and authority above all, the Church shall be led by Elders, men called by the church to be its spiritual fathers.

Qualifications:

Church Elders shall satisfy the qualifications for the office of Elder set forth in I Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:6–9, and therefore shall be above reproach, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not addicted to much wine or pugnacious, but gentle, not contentious, free from the love of money, not a new convert, having a good reputation outside the church, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, loving what is good and sensible, just, devout, and self-controlled. An Elder should also be a good manager of his household and if married, the husband of one wife, and, if he has children, they should be faithful and submissive.

Number and Term of Service:

The number of Elders will be determined by the Elder body based on the needs of the church but shall typically be no fewer than seven, to include the Senior Pastor and other men elected on rotating terms of service. Additionally, the Executive Pastor shall serve as a non-voting *ex-officio* member. A majority of the active Eldership shall be comprised of Church members not in the regular pay of the Church, and no Elder shall hold the office of Deacon during his tenure. The rotating terms of service shall be three years for lay Elders, and two years for staff Elders. An Elder who has completed a term shall wait a minimum of one year before beginning a new active Elder term upon recommendation by the current active Elders. During the period an Elder is “inactive”, he will be a non-voting Elder and will not be assigned the normal duties of an active Elder.

Selection:

Upon request from the Elders, the Church membership shall be asked to nominate men who have proven themselves mature in the faith and dedicated to the Mission of the Church. These nominations will be received by the Church Elders who will evaluate and test the nominees. The Elders shall then present Elder candidate(s) to the congregation at least three weeks before the Church will be asked to affirm the Elder candidate(s). Then in a business meeting the Church shall vote on each candidate individually. Elder terms shall follow the Church calendar year.

As soon as practical, newly elected Elders who have not been ordained shall be ordained. Elders shall work with the Senior Pastor to make arrangements for the ordination service.

Upon sufficient grounds, the call for a Church Elder’s resignation or removal shall be resolved by the Church Elders.

Officers:

The Senior Pastor shall serve as Chairman of the Elders. The Chairman's duties include leading the Church Elders to perform their tasks, preparing an agenda for each regularly scheduled meeting, notifying members of the time and place of each meeting, presiding over plans and actions suggested to the Church Elders. The Senior Pastor may delegate any of these duties to another Elder. The Church Elders shall elect a Vice-Chairman and a Secretary. If the Church does not have a Senior Pastor, the Church Elders shall elect an Interim Chairman.

Meetings:

Meetings of the Church Elders shall normally be held once a month. Being mindful of the Elders' obligation to the Church membership to fulfill their tasks in a timely and efficient manner, the Chairman shall have the option of canceling or rescheduling a meeting for sufficient cause.

Responsibilities:

The Elders shall oversee and shepherd the Church, support and encourage the work of the staff, deacons, and committees; equip the membership for the work of the ministry; encourage sound doctrine and practice; admonish and correct error; oversee the process of Church discipline; pray for the sick when asked; promote and give leadership to the ministries of the Church; encourage the mobilization of the Church for world missions; and be firmly committed to praying for the pastoral staff.

Duties:

The Church Elders shall assume the following duties:

1. Assist the Senior Pastor and Ministerial staff in clarifying the Church's vision, mission, and priorities.
2. Review and evaluate studies of major Church expansion plans.
3. Review ministry plans and programs as appropriate.
4. Prepare and present theological position papers, and other church policy to the congregation when called upon by the congregation to do so or when deemed necessary by the Elders. These papers and policies will become official positions and policies of the church when adopted by the congregation in a church business meeting with the affirmation of two-thirds of the members present and voting at that meeting.
5. Convey items of interest from Church membership to the appropriate staff person, Committee member, or Church ministry leader.
6. Interpret the Constitution, Bylaws, and written policies of the Church and ensure that these policies are maintained, updated, and are in accordance with one another.
7. Oversee and ensure that all Committees and Ministry Teams are operating in compliance with the Constitution, Bylaws, and written policies of the Church.
8. Approve the annual Church budget before its presentation to the Church and ensure its compliance with the mission and vision of the Church.
9. Appoint and approve a Pastor Search Committee in the absence of a Senior Pastor.
10. Oversee the ordination of men and commissioning of persons from the Church to gospel ministry.
11. Approve nominations to the deacon body, and Church committees.
12. Collaborate with the Personnel Committee to approve the hiring of all executive

level pastors.

Relationships:

1. With Committees: The Church Elders shall oversee but shall not do the work of the Committees. Items of Committee business to be brought before the church shall first be channeled through the Church Elders and, upon their recommendation, taken to the church for a vote.
2. With Deacons: Elders shall give support and oversight to the ministry and service plans of the Deacon body. While the Deacon body is not a governing body, the Elder body should periodically consult with the Deacon body to communicate with and hear from the congregation.
3. With the Senior Pastor and Staff: The Pastor is the Senior Elder and serves as the Chairman of the Elders. As the administrator of the Church staff, the Pastor shall represent the staff on the Church Elder body. The Church Elders shall assist the Pastor with administrative and Committee responsibilities as they help him to oversee the ministry of the Church. The Pastor shall have the responsibility of administering the day-to-day operation of the Church through the Church staff. Church Elders shall serve as a sounding board for the Pastor, pray with him, and encourage him in being God's man. They shall provide a spiritual accountability group for the Pastor.

SECTION II – DEACONS

General:

The Church, guided by I Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:3-8, shall elect Deacons from its membership.

Qualifications:

Church Deacons shall satisfy the qualifications of Deacon set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and in Acts 6:3 and, therefore, shall be dignified, of good repute, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, self-controlled, not greedy for dishonest gain, and sound in faith, holding firm to the true gospel without wavering. If married, he must be the husband of one godly wife who is dignified. He must be sober-minded and faithful in all things, and he must manage his children and household well. He must not be slanderous. He must be blameless and have a good standing with the Church and community. A Deacon must be a man at least 21 years of age and a member of the Church for at least one year prior to being elected.

Number and Term of Service:

The number of active Deacons shall be determined based on the needs and size of the Church. A regular term of office shall be three years, with approximately one-third of the Deacons rotating off every year. The term shall begin January 1 of each year. A Deacon who has completed a term shall, after one year, be eligible for re-election to the active body. Upon sufficient grounds, the call for a Deacon's resignation prior to completion of his term shall be resolved by the active Deacons.

Selection:

The Deacon Nominating Committee, selected from the Deacons by the Deacons, shall solicit

nominations from the Church. The Deacon Nominating Committee shall consider nominations from a slate of candidates and then interview and examine the candidates. The purpose of these interviews is to explain the responsibilities of a Deacon, to review the candidates' qualifications, and to ensure each candidate's willingness to serve.

Before the calendar year-end, the Chairman of the Deacons shall obtain from the Deacon Nominating Committee and then submit to the Church for affirmation a list of nominees for the vacancies that exist. The Church shall have the option of accepting or rejecting the entire slate of nominees.

Responsibilities:

A Deacon is to be a servant of the Church. As such, he is to join with the Pastor and other staff members in the following:

1. Being devoted to and united in prayer with the Pastor and Staff for the ministry of the Church;
2. Faithfulness in worship attendance and Church-wide functions;
3. Faithfulness in attendance and active participation in Deacons' meetings and Deacons' retreats;
4. Assisting the Pastor(s) in conducting Church ordinances;
5. Serving the Body at Valleydale Church by having an area of service/ministry and by modeling the biblical understanding of "servant leadership"; and
6. Fulfilling other duties as assigned and determined by the Deacon leadership.

Officers:

Deacon officers shall be Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary for that year and shall be elected by the Deacons.

Ordination:

As soon as is practical, newly elected Deacons who have not been ordained shall be ordained. Working with the Senior Pastor, the Deacon Chairman shall make arrangements for the ordination service.

SECTION III – TRUSTEES

Duties:

The responsibility of the Trustees is to represent the Church in a legal capacity as directed by the Church through official Church action and as provided by the Articles of Incorporation in keeping with the law of the State of Alabama. Trustees shall act as legal representatives of the Church and to assume those duties and engage in those actions required of them by law. While the Trustees are the legal representatives of the Church, their actions shall be based on the lawful directions of and the authority provided by the Elders, Members, and other appropriate processes of the Church.

Trustees cannot be related by blood or marriage. Trustees shall have supervision over all deeds, bonds, insurance policies, and important papers of the Church. They are authorized to receive and disburse monies in accordance with the terms of wills, bequests, and special instruments in which the Church is named beneficiary. If the Church is named beneficiary through any of these

documents, and if there is no designation as to a particular program, the Trustees may bring a recommendation to the Elders as to which program the money should be designated.

At least two Trustees may represent the Trustees as a whole.

Term and Election:

The active lay Elders shall serve as Trustees.

Officers:

The Trustees shall elect from among themselves a Chairman and Secretary with a one-year term of service.

SECTION IV – MODERATOR

The Senior Pastor or his designee shall serve as Moderator of all business meetings, unless the Elder majority determines otherwise. The Church Moderator is responsible for conducting all business meetings of the Church. In his absence, his designee shall preside. Specifically, the Moderator shall be responsible for preparing agendas for Church business meetings and conducting meetings in accordance with Church Bylaws.

SECTION V – CLERK AND ASSISTANT CLERK

The Clerk and Assistant Clerk shall be nominated by the Elders and shall be elected by the Church at a business meeting. The Clerk attends and takes minutes at all business meetings and shall work with the Church Staff to administer the Church Roll. Specifically, the Church Roll shall be updated annually, in accordance with these Bylaws and in cooperation with the Church Staff, by the Clerk, Assistant Clerk and other Church members designated for this purpose.

The term of service for Clerk and Assistant Clerk is two years, with the Assistant Clerk becoming Clerk at the term's end. The purpose of this structure is to provide continuity for keeping accurate Church records.

All Church records are Church property and are to be filed in the Church office.

In the absence of the Clerk, the Assistant Clerk shall perform the duties of this office, or an appropriate designee may be assigned if the Assistant Clerk is unavailable.

SECTION VI – TREASURER

The Church Treasurer shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and shall be elected by the Church at a business meeting. The term of service shall be five years.

The Church delegates to the Church Treasurer the duty to receive and disburse all Church funds for authorized expenditures and to pay authorized obligations, unless otherwise determined by the Church at a business meeting. Working in accord with the Church Staff, the Church Treasurer shall keep a true and fair book of accounts, and shall render monthly to the Church a statement of all receipts and disbursements. The Church Treasurer shall be an *ex-officio* member of the Finance Committee.

ARTICLE IV - CHURCH COMMITTEES

SECTION I - MEMBERSHIP

The number of members on a committee shall be no more than seven and generally shall be an odd number with approximately one-third rotating off each year and approximately one-third being nominated and elected each year. Members of a committee must have been Church members for at least one year prior to the term of service. The Senior Pastor shall be an *ex-officio* member of all Church committees with the right to notice of meeting and the right to participate in the meetings but shall not have the right to vote.

SECTION II - ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE

The members of each committee shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Church at a business meeting. The members shall serve beginning January 1 and shall serve on a three-year rotating system. Vacancies on committees shall be filled as they occur by the Nominating Committee, selecting nominees who, after approval by the Elders, shall serve the remainder of the term of the person being replaced.

An individual may serve on a committee for no more than three consecutive years unless the Elders or Church policies waive this requirement. An individual should not serve on more than one standing committee at a time unless the Elders or Church policies waive this requirement. No member shall serve as Chairman of more than one committee at any given time, except for the Nominating Committee.

SECTION III - COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION

The Nominating Committee, consulting with each current Committee Chairman, shall nominate new members for each committee. Each committee shall then select its own Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary. The Elders shall approve the Finance, Personnel and Missions Committees prior to the Nominating Committee's report to the Church for approval.

SECTION IV - MEETINGS

The Chairman or his designee shall, prior to a committee meeting, notify other committee members of the time, purpose, and place of the meeting. The Chairman shall be responsible for planning the meeting agenda and assigning responsibilities to the committee members.

SECTION V - PARLIAMENTARY RULES

These committees shall decide all matters of business by a majority vote.

SECTION VI – NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee shall be the Senior Pastor and one other Pastor he selects; Chairman of the Deacons; Chairmen of the Finance, Personnel and Missions Committees; and two Elders selected by the Elders. If a Chairman of a Committee is an active Elder, then that Committee shall select a designee to serve in his place on the Nominating Committee. This committee shall be responsible for nominating all standing Church Committees, Treasurer and Clerks and for presenting them for approval at a business meeting. Each member of the Nominating Committee shall have full veto power over any nominee.

SECTION VII – PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

This committee shall be responsible for assisting the Church in matters related to all compensated personnel administration.

Duties:

1. Consult with the Senior Pastor and staff at least once a quarter regarding personnel updates, the need for additional positions, or the elimination of existing positions, including the review of any interim appointments of personnel.
2. Approve position descriptions for Church employees and approve revisions to current position descriptions as necessary.
3. Maintain, update, and approve a Personnel Policies and Procedures manual.
4. Assist the Senior Pastor and act on his recommendations regarding personnel recruitment, hiring, disciplinary actions, and termination of employment.
5. Assist the Senior Pastor and other staff positions in the performance evaluation of ministerial and non-ministerial staff.
6. Prepare and approve the personnel budget annually in conjunction with the Finance Committee for presentation to the Church for a vote before the current fiscal year-end. The total personnel budget will be presented for Church vote as a part of the entire Church budget; individual salaries will not be identified.
7. Develop and recommend salaries and benefits for all compensated Church personnel in conjunction with the Finance Committee, including but not limited to housing allowance, car allowance, insurance, salary, holidays, sick leave, vacation, and all other benefits.
8. Recommend to the Elders disciplinary action regarding the Senior Pastor resulting from complaints or misconduct, including but not limited to suspension or termination. Termination of the Senior Pastor, however, shall require approval of two-thirds of those members in attendance and voting at a special Church business meeting called for this specific purpose.
9. Work with the Elders to call an interim or transitional Senior Pastor when the full-time Senior Pastor resigns, retires, becomes incapacitated, or dies, or when his employment is terminated.

SECTION VIII – FINANCE COMMITTEE

This committee shall be responsible for overseeing the development and management of the Church budget and addressing the financial needs of the Church.

Duties:

1. Work with the staff to develop an overall financial strategy and budget for the Church year(s).
2. Oversee the staff's annual budget preparation and present it to the Church for approval before current fiscal year-end.
3. Administer the budget during the year by regularly reviewing budget expenditures and bringing any areas of necessary adjustment in budget expenditures to the attention of the appropriate Church staff, committees, or the Church at large.
4. Assist the Senior Pastor, staff, committees, or ministries of the Church with the financial aspects of their functions and duties for the Church.
5. Delegate certain duties outlined herein to other authorized personnel as determined to be appropriate, provided that those handling Church funds shall be duly named under appropriate security bond.
6. Design procedures and maintain supervision and processes over all financial matters pertaining to the Church.
7. Oversee the counting of all Church offerings in accordance with the Church Financial Policy.
8. Maintain, update, and approve a Finance Policies and Procedures manual.
9. The Finance Committee Chairman shall serve as president of the United Appeal.

SECTION IX - MISSIONAL LIVING COMMITTEE

This committee shall have oversight of missions' efforts and partnerships, as well as financial accountability of the Missions Committee budget.

Duties:

1. Develop and manage the Missions portion of the Church budget in cooperation with the Finance Committee.
2. Provide intentional and practical opportunities to equip all Valleydale members, incorporating Valleydale values, to live on mission locally and globally.
3. Develop mission partnership criteria, authorization, termination and implementation of partnership agreements, as well as establish/monitor accountability procedures for partnerships.
4. Regularly communicate with the Church by providing information, opportunities, and needs.
5. Use the diverse media outlets of the church to encourage the Church to live on mission.
6. Actively seek God's will for future mission/ministry opportunities through steadfast prayer and fasting.
7. Work with staff and church leaders to develop and implement a culture of living on mission daily to all church members.
8. Maintain, update, and approve updates for the missions manual.

SECTION X – AD HOC COMMITTEES

The Senior Pastor shall approve, establish, and appoint all Committees other than standing Committees for specific purposes as requested by Church Staff, Elders, Deacons, or the Church. These Committees shall be disbanded upon the completion of their particular purpose for being organized.

ARTICLE V – STANDARDS FOR SERVICE

All Elders, Deacons, staff and committee members shall be in good standing with the Church, cheerfully giving at least a tithe, trustworthy, and of good reputation within the community.

ARTICLE VI - CHURCH YEAR

SECTION I - CHURCH FISCAL YEAR

The Church fiscal year shall begin January 1 and end December 31. The annual Church budget shall be on this fiscal-year basis.

SECTION II - CHURCH ORGANIZATIONAL YEAR

The Church organizational year shall begin January 1 and end December 31. The terms of all Committee members, Officers, Elders, and Deacons shall be on a calendar-year basis.

ARTICLE VII - CHURCH MEETINGS

SECTION I – BUSINESS MEETINGS

Three regular business meetings shall be scheduled each year. Special or called business meetings may be held upon the recommendation of the Senior Pastor or Elders.

An announcement of time and purpose of the meeting shall be made at least two weeks prior to the meeting, unless extreme urgency renders such a notice impractical. Discussion at special or called meetings shall be limited to the urgent purpose for which the meeting was called or the purpose specified in the meeting announcement. The Senior Pastor or Elders who called for the meeting shall be able to cancel or reschedule a special or called meeting because of extraordinary circumstances.

The Senior Pastor or his designee shall serve as Moderator of all business meetings, unless the Elder majority determines otherwise.

SECTION II – OTHER MEETINGS

Staff, officer, and committee meetings shall be attended by active members of those entities and invited guests.

SECTION III – PARLIAMENTARY RULES

If Church voting shall occur at any business meeting, at such time the Moderator shall determine the appropriate method of voting, including voice, standing, show of hands, or written votes. Unless otherwise specified in this Constitution and Bylaws, all matters of business shall be carried by a majority vote of the members present and voting. The most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall be the guideline for parliamentary procedures for all business meetings of the Church, with the Holy Scripture as the ultimate authority.

SECTION IV – CHURCH MESSENGERS

Messengers to attend the Southern Baptist Convention, Alabama Baptist Convention, Birmingham Baptist Association, and other meetings may be elected by the Elders and typically are affirmed by the Church.

ARTICLE VIII - ORDINANCES

SECTION I - BAPTISM

A person who receives Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith, who professes Him publicly at any worship service, and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord shall be received for baptism.

1. Baptism shall be in water by immersion.
2. Individuals seeking baptism shall be counseled by a Pastor or his designee prior to baptism.
3. Baptism shall be administered by the Senior Pastor or his designee.
4. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any Church gathering authorized by the Senior Pastor.
5. Baptism shall be assisted by the Deacons.

SECTION II - THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience. By partaking of the bread and fruit of the vine, members of the Church commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His second coming.

1. The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least quarterly.
2. The Lord's Supper may be observed at any Church gathering authorized by the Senior Pastor.
3. The Senior Pastor or his designee shall be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper.

The administration of the Lord's Supper shall be assisted by the Deacons.

ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENT PROCEDURE

Changes to these Bylaws may be made at any Church business meeting provided that a copy of each amendment is made available to Church members in writing at least one month before the meeting. Amendments to these Bylaws shall have the concurrence of two-thirds of the members who are present and voting.

Amendments:

12/6/2015 Amendment by Church Vote

Section III - Process for Membership Amendment

Before being accepted as members, all candidates for membership shall:

1. Attend a membership class.
2. Meet with **an elder**, a member of the pastoral staff, **or their designee** to discuss Church membership.
3. Sign a membership agreement that they have read and agree to and submit to the Church Covenant and Baptist and Faith Message, 2000, and the Church Constitution and Bylaws.

Statement of Beliefs

15. **We believe that followers of Jesus are indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God who is the third person of the Trinity and who strengthens believers to grow in holiness and in obedience to the commands of Christ.**
19. We believe in baptism by immersion in water as a proclamation of faith and an experience **of fellowship with Christ in his death and resurrection.**

Article III - Church Covenant Amendment

Having been led by the Spirit of God to accept Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord and having entered into the fellowship of His church, we prayerfully and joyfully make this covenant with one another and with Him.

1. **We covenant together to Make Jesus Known and Make Disciples, affirming our Statement of Beliefs.**
2. **We commit to worship God corporately, and to pursue God devotionally both in private and with our families. We will not forsake this worship, but commit to pursue God regularly, sacrificially, generously, and with humility. We further commit to urge one another to be faithful in participating in the various components of worship; declarations of praise, sincere prayer, cheerful giving, and right living before the sovereign God of the universe.**
3. **We commit to connect with one another in sincere community, therefore we commit to join together in groups focused on biblical truth, intentional community, and disciple making. We commit to pray for one another, care for one another, and meet the needs of one another, always pursuing reconciliation and Church unity. Together, we commit to study God's word, teach one another God's truth, and urge one another to live out this**

truth. We further commit to connect with unbelievers for the sake of the advancement of the gospel.

4. We commit to use the gifts that God has given us to advance His Kingdom. Therefore, we commit to find a place to serve, whereby we can take part in building the Kingdom of Christ cheerfully, readily, and sacrificially in the Church, in our community, and even to the ends of the earth.
5. We submit to biblical authority, and to the authority of the congregation, and to the instruction, care, and discipline of the elders.
6. Finally, should we ever leave this church we commit to resign from this body and as soon as possible join another gospel centered, biblically driven church.

We make all of these commitments by the grace of Lord Jesus Christ, with his help, and for his glory.

5/15/2019 Amendment by Church Vote

Bylaw revisions in red submitted to congregation by Elders.

SECTION I - CHURCH ELDERS (Pg 9)

Selection:

The Church membership shall be asked to nominate men who have proven themselves mature in the faith and dedicated to the Mission of the Church. These nominations will be received by the **Church Elders** who will evaluate and test the nominees. The **Elders** shall then present **the** potential **Elder(s)** to the congregation at least three weeks before the Church will be asked to affirm **the** Elder **candidate(s)**. Then in a business meeting the Church shall vote on each candidate individually. Vacancies of unexpired terms shall be filled for the remainder of the term in like manner. Elder terms shall follow the Church calendar year.

SECTION VI – NOMINATING COMMITTEE (pg 14/15)

The Nominating Committee shall be the Senior Pastor and one other Pastor he selects; Chairman of the Deacons; Chairmen of the Finance, Personnel and Missions Committees; and two Elders selected by the Elders. If a Chairman of a Committee is an active Elder, then that Committee shall select a designee to serve in his place on the Nominating Committee. This committee shall be responsible for nominating all standing Church Committees, **Elders**, Treasurer and Clerks and for presenting them for approval at a business meeting. Each member of the Nominating Committee shall have full veto power over any nominee.

11/17/2019 Amendments by Church Vote Revision

#1 – Update Church Mission Statement

Article II - Mission Statement and Beliefs Amendment

The Mission Statement of Valleydale Church is the basis and purpose for which all activities, programs, and decisions are made. That statement is as follows:

“Generations helping our busy Community Know Christ and Live for Him.”

Article II - Church Covenant Amendment

Having been led by the Spirit of God to accept Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord and having entered into the fellowship of His church, we prayerfully and joyfully make this covenant with one another and with Him.

7. We covenant together to be **Generations helping our busy community Know Christ and Live for Him**, affirming our Statement of Beliefs.

Revision #2 – Add a Statement Marriage and Sexuality, under Article 11, following Statement of Beliefs.

Statement on Marriage and Sexuality

We believe the term “marriage” has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 2:18-25). We believe that marriage between one man and one woman, for life, uniquely reflects Christ’s relationship with His Church (Eph. 5:21-33). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

Valleydale Church believes that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary sexes together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Rejection of one’s biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, or use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt. 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 6:9-10).

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Valleydale Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to Valleydale Church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Valleydale Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thess 5:22).

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11).

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hatful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Valleydale Church.

Statement on the Sanctity of Human Life

Valleydale Church believes that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception

through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Ps. 139.)

Statement of Final Authority

Final Authority for Matters of Belief and Conduct:

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Valleydale Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Senior Pastor and Board of Elders are Valleydale's final interpretive authority on the Bible's application.

Revision #3 – Membership

Section III - Process for Membership Amendment

Before being accepted as members, all candidates for membership shall:

4. Attend a membership class.
5. Meet with an elder, a member of the pastoral staff, or their designee to discuss Church membership.
6. Sign a membership agreement that they have read and agree to and submit to the Church Covenant and Baptist and Faith Message, 2000, and the Church Constitution and Bylaws.

Then, at a following business meeting, the Elders **or representative** will present prospective members to the Church for affirmation or denial and record.

Revision #4 – Church Elders, Officers

Article II - Church Officers, Section 1 Amendment

Officers:

The Senior Pastor, **or his nominee from the Elders**, shall serve as Chairman of the Elders. **His The Chairman's** duties include leading the Church Elders to perform their tasks, preparing an agenda for each regularly scheduled meeting, notifying members of the time and place of each meeting, presiding over plans and actions suggested to the Church Elders. The Church Elders shall elect a Vice-Chairman and a Secretary. If the Church does not have a pastor, the Church Elders shall elect an Interim Chairman.

11/20/2022 Amendments by Church Vote

ARTICLE III - CHURCH OFFICERS

SECTION I - CHURCH ELDERS

General:

While fully recognizing and believing that Jesus Christ is the head and authority above all, the Church shall be led by Elders, men called by the church to be its spiritual fathers.

Qualifications:

Church Elders shall satisfy the qualifications for the office of Elder set forth in I Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:6–9, and therefore shall be above reproach, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not addicted to much wine or pugnacious, but gentle, not contentious, free from the love of money, not a new convert, having a good reputation outside the church, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, loving what is good and sensible, just, devout, and self controlled. An Elder should also be a good manager of his household and if married, the husband of one wife, and, if he has children, they should be faithful and submissive.

Number and Term of Service:

The number of Elders will be determined by the Elder body based on the needs of the church but shall typically be no fewer than seven, to include the Senior Pastor and ~~six others~~ other men elected on rotating terms of service. Additionally, the Executive Pastor shall serve as a non voting *ex-officio* member. A majority of the active Eldership shall be comprised of Church members not in the regular pay of the Church, and no Elder shall hold the office of Deacon during his tenure. The rotating terms of service shall be three years for lay Elders, and two years for staff Elders. An Elder who has completed a term shall wait a minimum of one year before he is eligible to serve again beginning a new active Elder term upon recommendation by the current active Elders. During the period an Elder is "inactive", he will be a non-voting Elder and will not be assigned the normal duties of an active Elder.

Selection:

Upon request from the Elders, ~~the~~ Church membership shall be asked to nominate men who have proven themselves mature in the faith and dedicated to the Mission of the Church. These nominations will be received by the Church Elders who will evaluate and test the nominees. The Elders shall then present ~~the potential~~ Elder candidate(s) to the congregation at least three weeks before the Church will be asked to affirm the Elder candidate(s). Then in a business meeting the Church shall vote on each candidate individually. ~~Vacancies of unexpired terms shall be filled for the remainder of the term in like manner.~~ Elder terms shall follow the Church calendar year.

As soon as practical, newly elected Elders who have not been ordained shall be ordained. Elders shall work with the Senior Pastor to make arrangements for the ordination service.

Upon sufficient grounds, the call for a Church Elder's resignation or removal prior to the completion of his term shall be resolved by the Church Elders.

Officers:

The Senior Pastor ~~or his nominee from the Elders~~ shall serve as Chairman of the Elders. The Chairman's duties include leading the Church Elders to perform their tasks, preparing an agenda for each regularly scheduled meeting, notifying members of the time and place of each meeting, presiding over plans and actions suggested to the Church Elders. The Senior Pastor may delegate any of these duties to another Elder. The Church Elders shall elect a Vice Chairman and a Secretary. If the Church does not have a Senior Pastor, the Church Elders shall elect an Interim Chairman.

Meetings:

Meetings of the Church Elders shall normally be held once a month. Being mindful of the Elders' obligation to the Church membership to fulfill their tasks in a timely and efficient manner, the Chairman shall have the option of canceling or rescheduling a meeting for sufficient cause.

Responsibilities:

The Elders shall oversee and shepherd ~~the members of the Church;~~ ~~give vision, leadership, and oversight to support, and encourage~~ the work of the staff, deacons, and committees; equip the membership for the work of the ministry; encourage sound doctrine and practice; admonish and correct error; oversee the process of Church discipline; pray for the sick when asked; promote and give leadership to the ministries of the Church; ~~lead in mobilizing~~ encourage the mobilization of the Church for world missions; and be firmly committed to praying for the pastoral staff.

Duties:

The Church Elders shall assume the following duties:

1. Assist the Senior Pastor and Ministerial staff in clarifying the Church's vision, mission, and priorities.
2. Review and evaluate studies of major Church expansion plans.
3. Review ministry plans and programs as appropriate.
4. Prepare and present theological position papers, and other church policy to the congregation when called upon by the congregation to do so or when deemed necessary by the Elders. These papers and policies will become official positions and policies of the church when adopted by the congregation in a church business meeting with the affirmation of two-thirds of the members present and voting at that meeting.
5. Convey items of interest from Church membership to the appropriate staff person, Committee member, or Church ministry leader.
6. Interpret the Constitution, Bylaws, and written policies of the Church and ensure that these policies are maintained, updated, and are in accordance with one another.
7. Oversee and ensure that all Committees and Ministry Teams are operating in compliance with the Constitution, Bylaws, and written policies of the Church.
8. Approve the annual Church budget before its presentation to the Church and ensure its compliance with the mission and vision of the Church.
9. Appoint and approve a Pastor Search Committee in the absence of a Senior Pastor.
10. Oversee the ordination of men and commissioning of persons from the Church to gospel ministry.
11. Approve nominations to the deacon body, and Church committees.
12. Collaborate with the Personnel Committee to approve the hiring of all executive level pastors.

Relationships:

1. With Committees: The Church Elders shall oversee but shall not do the work of the Committees. Items of Committee business to be brought before the church shall first be channeled through the Church Elders and, upon their recommendation, taken to the church for a vote.
2. With Deacons: Elders shall give ~~vision and leadership support and oversight~~ to the ministry and service plans of the Deacon body. While the Deacon body is not a governing body, the Elder body should periodically consult with the Deacon body to communicate with and hear from the congregation.
3. With the Senior Pastor and Staff: The Pastor is the Senior Elder and serves as the Chairman of the Elders. As the administrator of the Church staff, the Pastor shall represent the staff on the Church Elder body. The Church Elders shall assist the Pastor with administrative and Committee responsibilities as they help him to oversee the ministry of the Church. The Pastor shall have the responsibility of administering the day to-day operation of the Church through the Church staff. Church Elders shall serve as a sounding board for the Pastor, pray with him, and encourage him in being God's man. They shall provide a spiritual accountability group for the Pastor.

04/23/2023 Amendments by Church Vote

Missions - Bylaw Change Vote

SECTION IX – MISSIONAL LIVING COMMITTEE

This committee shall have oversight of missions' efforts and partnerships, as well as financial accountability of the Missions Committee budget.

Duties:

1. Develop and manage the Missions portion of the Church budget in cooperation with the Finance Committee. ~~This will include the budget for local, national, and global partnerships.~~
2. ~~Provide intentional and practical opportunities to equip all Valleydale members, incorporating Valleydale values, to live on mission locally and globally.~~
3. Develop mission partnership criteria, authorization, termination ~~and~~ ~~to~~ ~~partnerships~~; implementation of partnership agreements, ~~as well as~~ ~~and~~ establish/monitor accountability procedures for partnerships.
4. Regularly communicate with the Church by providing information, opportunities, and needs. ~~related to the mission efforts of the Church.~~
5. ~~Use the diverse media outlets of the church to encourage the Church to live on mission. Promote career mission opportunities.~~
6. ~~Actively seek God's will for future mission/ministry opportunities through steadfast prayer and fasting. and serve as a catalyst to promote adoption of these opportunities.~~
7. ~~Work with staff and church leaders to develop and implement a culture of living on mission daily to all church members. Promote mission training opportunities. Encourage and coordinate Missions prayer efforts with the Prayer Ministry Coordinator.~~

- ~~8. Collaborate in a Church-wide effort to infuse missions as integral to the Church's identity, leading all members to see missions, not just as a program or activity but as essential to who we are as followers of Christ.~~
8. Maintain, update, and approve [updates for the missions](#) a missions Policies and Procedures manual.

09/17/2023 Amendments by Church Vote

Constitution Statement of Marriage and Sexuality (Paragraph 3)

From:

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, or use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt. 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 6:9-10).

To:

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including **but not limited to**, adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, **bestiality, incest**, or use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt. 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 6:9-10).

Bylaws Section VI – Termination of Membership (Point 4)

From:

4. Inactivity with the Church for more than one year. This will result in the Church contacting the member to determine whether he or she desires to continue as a Church member. If the Church is unable to make contact or if the member expresses a desire to be removed as a member, then the member shall be removed from the Church roll.

To:

4. ~~Inactivity with the Church for more than one year. This will result in the Church contacting the member to determine whether he or she desires to continue as a Church member. If the Church is unable to make contact or~~ (If the member expresses a desire to be removed as a member, then the member shall be removed from the Church roll.