

Bylaws and Doctrinal Statement of Bethany Bible Church

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Bylaws and Doctrinal Statement of Bethany Bible Church

Article 1- Name

The name of this church shall be Plano Bethany Bible Church, also known as Bethany Bible Church, a non-profit corporation organized under the laws of the State of Texas. Its place of service shall be 3300 W. Parker Road, Plano, Texas, but the corporation may also have offices at such other places as the Board of Directors may determine or as the affairs of the corporation may require.

Article 2-Purpose

The purpose of this church shall be: to proclaim the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ as a means of reaching unbelievers (Mark 16:15); to worship and glorify God (John 4:23-24); to edify believers in Christian living (Ephesians 4:12); to encourage and promote fellowship of the saints (1 John 1:3, 7); and to equip others for vocational Christian service (2 Timothy 2:2) as taught in Scripture.

Article 3-Doctrinal Statement

The written Word of God is infallible and without errors. It is to be interpreted with a normal hermeneutic where the mind of the author (not the interpreter) controls the intended meaning. The Bible is our primary authority and is binding whenever we share the essential elements of the original audience. We regard the following to be central truths of Scripture:

1. The gift of everlasting life is given to all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. By His death for our sins and His resurrection, He has become mankind's only Savior. We often refer to this as "salvation by faith alone in Christ alone."
2. The believer has the desire to serve God, but not the ability. He/she must depend upon the indwelling Holy Spirit in order to live a life that is pleasing to the Lord.
3. Our Savior could return for His church at any moment and we would be caught up to meet Him in the air. We refer to this event as the "Rapture." Truth regarding the church in no way cancels out the promises made by God to the nation of Israel, which will be literally and completely fulfilled.

What follows is a complete set of our doctrinal beliefs.

Section 1—The Scriptures

We believe that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God," by which we understand the whole Bible is inspired in the sense that holy men of God "were moved by the Holy Spirit" to write the very words of Scripture. We believe that this divine inspiration extends equally and fully to all parts of the writings—historical, poetical, doctrinal, and prophetic—as appeared in the original manuscripts. We believe that the whole Bible in the originals is therefore without error. We believe that all the Scriptures center about the Lord Jesus Christ in His person and work in His first and second coming, and hence that no portion, even of the Old Testament, is properly read, or understood, until it leads to Him. We also believe that all the Scriptures were designed for our practical instruction (Mark 12:26, 36; 13:11; Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39; Acts 1:16; 17:2-3; 18:28; 26:22-23; 28:23; Rom. 15:4; 1 Corinthians. 2:13; 10:11; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21).

Section 2—The Godhead

We believe that the Godhead eternally exists in three persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—and that these three are one God, having precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfections, and worthy of precisely the same homage, confidence, and obedience (Matt. 28:18-19; Mark 12:29; John 1:14; Acts 5:3-4; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Heb. 1:1-3; Rev. 1:4-6).

Section 3—Angels, Fallen and Unfallen

We believe that God created an innumerable company of sinless, spiritual beings, known as angels; that one, “Lucifer, son of the morning”—the highest in rank—sinned through pride, thereby becoming Satan; that a great company of the angels followed him in his moral fall, some of whom became demons and are active as his agents and associates in the prosecution of his unholy purposes, while others who fell are “reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day” (Isaiah 14:12–17; Ezek. 28:11–19; 1 Tim. 3:6; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6).

We believe that Satan is the originator of sin, and that, under the permission of God, he, through subtlety, led our first parents into transgression, thereby accomplishing their moral fall and subjecting them and their posterity to his own power; that he is the enemy of God and the people of God, opposing and exalting himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped; and that he who in the beginning said, “I will be like the most High,” in his warfare appears as an angel of light, even counterfeiting the works of God by fostering religious movements and systems of doctrine, which systems in every case are characterized by a denial of the efficacy of the blood of Christ and of salvation by grace alone (Gen. 3:1–19; Rom. 5:12–14; 2 Corinthians 4:3–4; 11:13–15; Eph. 6:10–12; 2 Thessalonians. 2:4; 1 Tim. 4:1–3). We believe that Satan was judged at the Cross, though not then executed, and that he, a usurper, now rules as the “god of this world”; that, at the second coming of Christ, Satan will be bound and cast into the abyss for a thousand years, and after the thousand years he will be loosed for a little season and then “cast into the lake of fire and brimstone,” where he “shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever” (Col. 2:15; Rev. 20:1–3, 10). We believe that a great company of angels kept their holy estate and are before the throne of God, from whence they are sent forth as ministering spirits to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation (Luke 15:10; Eph. 1:21; Heb. 1:14; Rev. 7:12). We believe that man was made lower than the angels; and that, in His incarnation, Christ took for a little time this lower place that He might lift the believer to His own sphere above the angels (Heb. 2:6–10).

Section 4—Man, Created and Fallen

We believe that man was originally created in the image and after the likeness of God, and that he fell through sin, and, as a consequence of his sin, lost his spiritual life, becoming dead in trespasses and sins, and that he became subject to the power of the devil. We also believe that this spiritual death, or total depravity of human nature, has been transmitted to the entire human race of man, the Man Christ Jesus alone being excepted; and hence that every child of Adam is born into the world with a nature which not only possesses no spark of divine life, but is essentially and unchangeably bad apart from divine grace (Gen. 1:26; 2:17; 6:5; Psalms 14:1–3; 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; John 3:6; 5:40; 6:35; Rom. 3:10–19; 8:6–7; Eph. 2:1–3; 1 Tim. 5:6; 1 John 3:8).

Section 5—The Dispensations

We believe that the dispensations are stewardships by which God administers His purpose on the earth through man under varying responsibilities. We believe that the changes in the dispensational dealings of God with man depend on changed conditions or situations in which man is successively found with relation to God, and that these changes are the result of the failures of man and the judgments of God. We believe that different administrative responsibilities of this character are manifest in the biblical record, that they span the entire history of mankind, and that each ends in the failure of man under the respective test and in an ensuing judgment from God. We believe that three of these dispensations or rules of life are the subject of extended revelation in the Scriptures, viz., the dispensation of the Mosaic Law, the present dispensation of grace, and the future dispensation of the millennial kingdom. We believe that these are distinct and are not to be intermingled or confused, as they are chronologically successive.

We believe that the dispensations are not ways of salvation nor different methods of administering the so-called Covenant of Grace. They are not in themselves dependent on covenant relationships but are ways of life and responsibility to God which test the submission of man to His revealed will during a particular time. We believe that if man does trust in his own efforts to gain the favor of God or salvation under any dispensational test, because of inherent sin his failure to satisfy fully the just requirements of God is inevitable and his condemnation sure.

We believe that according to the “eternal purpose” of God (Eph. 3:11) salvation in the divine reckoning is

always “by grace through faith,” and rests upon the basis of the shed blood of Christ. We believe that God has always been gracious, regardless of the ruling dispensation, but that man has not at all times been under an administration or stewardship of grace as is true in the present dispensation (1 Corinthians 9:17; Eph. 3:2; 3:9, asv; Col. 1:25; 1 Tim. 1:4, asv).

We believe that it has always been true that “without faith it is impossible to please” God (Heb. 11:6), and that the principle of faith was prevalent in the lives of all the Old Testament saints. However, we believe that it was historically impossible that they should have had as the conscious object of their faith the incarnate, crucified Son, the Lamb of God (John 1:29), and that it is evident that they did not comprehend as we do that the sacrifices depicted the person and work of Christ. We believe also that they did not understand the redemptive significance of the prophecies or types concerning the sufferings of Christ (1 Pet. 1:10–12); therefore, we believe that their faith toward God was manifested in other ways as is shown by the long record in Hebrews 11:1–40. We believe further that their faith thus manifested was counted unto them for righteousness (cf. Rom. 4:3 with Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:5–8; Heb. 11:7).

Section 6—The First Advent

We believe that, as provided and purposed by God and as pre-announced in the prophecies of the Scriptures, the eternal Son of God came into this world that He might manifest God to men, fulfill prophecy, and become the Redeemer of a lost world. To this end He was born of the virgin, and received a human body and a sinless human nature (Luke 1:30–35; John 1:18; 3:16; Heb. 4:15).

We believe that, on the human side, He became and remained a perfect man, but sinless throughout His life; yet He retained His absolute deity, being at the same time very God and very man, and that His earth-life sometimes functioned within the sphere of that which was human and sometimes within the sphere of that which was divine (Luke 2:40; John 1:1–2; Phil. 2:5–8).

We believe that in fulfillment of prophecy He came first to Israel as her Messiah-King, and that, being rejected of that nation, He, according to the eternal counsels of God, gave His life as a ransom for all (John 1:11; Acts 2:22–24; 1 Tim. 2:6).

We believe that, in infinite love for the lost, He voluntarily accepted His Father’s will and became the divinely provided sacrificial Lamb and took away the sin of the world, bearing the holy judgments against sin which the righteousness of God must impose. His death was therefore substitutionary in the most absolute sense—the just for the unjust—and by His death He became the Savior of the lost (John 1:29; Rom. 3:25–26; 2 Corinthians 5:14; Heb. 10:5–14; 1 Pet. 3:18).

We believe that, according to the Scriptures, He arose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which He had lived and died, and that His resurrection body is the pattern of that body which ultimately will be given to all believers (John 20:20; Phil. 3:20–21).

We believe that, on departing from the earth, He was accepted of His Father and that His acceptance is a final assurance to us that His redeeming work was perfectly accomplished (Heb. 1:3).

We believe that He became Head over all things to the church which is His body, and in this ministry He ceases not to intercede and advocate for the saved (Eph. 1:22–23; Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1).

Section 7—Salvation Only Through Christ

We believe that, owing to universal death through sin, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless born again; and that no degree of reformation however great, no attainments in morality however high, no culture however attractive, no baptism or other ordinance however administered, can help the sinner to take even one step toward heaven; but a new nature imparted from above, a new life implanted by the Holy Spirit through the Word, is absolutely essential to salvation, and only those thus saved are sons of God. We believe, also, that our redemption has been accomplished solely by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was made to be sin and was made a curse for us, dying in our room and stead; and that no repentance, no feeling, no creed, no good resolutions, no sincere efforts, no submission to the rules and regulations of any church, nor all the churches that have existed since the days of the Apostles can add in the very least degree to the value of the blood, or to the merit of the finished work wrought for us by Him who united in His person true and proper deity with perfect and sinless humanity (Lev. 17:11; Isaiah 64:6; Matt. 26:28; John 3:7–18; Rom. 5:6–9; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Gal. 3:13; 6:15; Eph. 1:7; Phil. 3:4–9; Titus 3:5; James 1:18; 1

Pet. 1:18–19, 23).

We believe that the new birth of the believer comes only through faith in Christ and that repentance is a vital part of believing, and is in no way, in itself, a separate and independent condition of salvation; nor are any other acts, such as confession, baptism, prayer, or faithful service, to be added to believing as a condition of salvation (John 1:12; 3:16, 18, 36; 5:24; 6:29; Acts 13:39; 16:31; Rom. 1:16–17; 3:22, 26; 4:5; 10:4; Gal. 3:22).

We agree with the following tenants regarding justification by faith:

- The Grace of God in justification is an unconditional free gift.
- The sole means of receiving the free gift of eternal life is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, whose substitutionary death on the cross fully satisfied the requirement for our justification.
- Faith is a personal response, apart from our works, whereby we are persuaded that the finished work of Jesus Christ has delivered us from condemnation and guaranteed our eternal life.
- Justification is the act of God to declare us righteous when we believe in Jesus Christ alone.
- Assurance of justification is the birthright of every believer from the moment of faith in Jesus Christ, and is founded upon the testimony of God in His written Word.
- Spiritual growth, which is distinct from justification, is God’s expectation for every believer; this growth, however, is not necessarily manifested uniformly in every believer.
- The Gospel of Grace should always be presented with such clarity and simplicity that no impression is left that justification requires any step, response, or action in addition to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 8—The Extent Of Salvation

We believe that when an unregenerate person exercises that faith in Christ which is illustrated and described as such in the New Testament, he passes immediately out of spiritual death into spiritual life, and from the old creation into the new; being justified from all things, accepted before the Father according as Christ His Son is accepted, loved as Christ is loved, having his place and portion as linked to Him and one with Him forever. Though the saved one may have occasion to grow in the realization of his blessings and to know a fuller measure of divine power through the yielding of his life more fully to God, he is, as soon as he is saved, in possession of every spiritual blessing and absolutely complete in Christ, and is therefore in no way required by God to seek a so-called “second blessing,” or a “second work of grace” (John 5:24; 17:23; Acts 13:39; Rom. 5:1; 1 Corinthians 3:21–23; Eph. 1:3; Col. 2:10; 1 John 4:17; 5:11–12).

Section 9—Sanctification

We believe that sanctification, which is a setting-apart unto God, is threefold: It is already complete for every saved person because his position toward God is the same as Christ’s position. Since the believer is in Christ, he is set apart unto God in the measure in which Christ is set apart unto God. We believe, however, that he retains his sin nature, which cannot be eradicated in this life. Therefore, while the standing of the Christian in Christ is perfect, his present state is no more perfect than his experience in daily life. There is, therefore, a progressive sanctification wherein the Christian is to “grow in grace,” and to “be changed” by the unhindered power of the Spirit. We believe also that the child of God will yet be fully sanctified in his state as he is now sanctified in his standing in Christ when he shall see his Lord and shall be “like Him” (John 17:17; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 7:1; Eph. 4:24; 5:25–27; 1 Thessalonians. 5:23; Heb. 10:10, 14; 12:10).

Section 10—Eternal Security

We believe that, because of the eternal purpose of God toward the objects of His love, because of His freedom to exercise grace toward the meritless on the ground of the propitiatory blood of Christ, because of the very nature of the divine gift of eternal life, because of the present and unending intercession and advocacy of Christ in heaven, because of the immutability of the unchangeable covenants of God, because

of the regenerating, abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all who are saved, we and all true believers everywhere, once saved shall be kept saved forever. We believe, however, that God is a holy and righteous Father and that, since He cannot overlook the sin of His children, He will, when they persistently sin, chasten them and correct them in infinite love; but having undertaken to save them and keep them forever, apart from all human merit, He, who cannot fail, will in the end present every one of them faultless before the presence of His glory and conformed to the image of His Son (John 5:24; 10:28; 13:1; 14:16–17; 17:11; Rom. 8:29; 1 Corinthians 6:19; Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1–2; 5:13; Jude 24).

Section 11—Assurance

We believe it is the privilege, not only of some, but of all who are born again by the Spirit through faith in Christ as revealed in the Scriptures, to be assured of their salvation from the very day they take Him to be their Savior and that this assurance is not founded upon any fancied discovery of their own worthiness or fitness, but wholly upon the testimony of God in His written Word, exciting within His children filial love, gratitude, and obedience (Luke 10:20; 22:32; 2 Corinthians 5:1, 6–8; 2 Tim. 1:12; Heb. 10:22; 1 John 5:13).

Section 12—The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the blessed Trinity, though omnipresent from all eternity, took up His abode in the world in a special sense on the day of Pentecost according to the divine promise, dwells in every believer, and by His baptism unites all to Christ in one body, and that He, as the Indwelling One, is the source of all power and all acceptable worship and service. We believe that He never takes His departure from the church, nor from the feeblest of the saints, but is ever present to testify of Christ; seeking to occupy believers with Him and not with themselves nor with their experiences. We believe that His abode in the world in this special sense will cease when Christ comes to receive His own at the completion of the church (John 14:16–17; 16:7–15; 1 Corinthians 6:19; Eph. 2:22; 2 Thessalonians 2:7).

We believe that, in this age, certain well-defined ministries are committed to the Holy Spirit, and that it is the duty of every Christian to understand them and to be adjusted to them in his own life and experience. These ministries are the restraining of evil in the world to the measure of the divine will; the convicting of the world respecting sin, righteousness, and judgment; the regenerating of all believers; the indwelling and anointing of all who are saved, thereby sealing them unto the day of redemption; the baptizing into the one body of Christ of all who are saved; and the continued filling for power, teaching, and service of those among the saved who are yielded to Him and who are subject to His will (John 3:6; 16:7–11; Rom. 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Eph. 4:30; 5:18; 2 Thessalonians 2:7; 1 John 2:20–27).

We believe that some gifts of the Holy Spirit such as speaking in tongues and miraculous healings were temporary. We believe that speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism nor of the filling of the Spirit, and that the deliverance of the body from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection (Acts 4:8, 31; Rom. 8:23; 1 Corinthians 13:8).

Section 13—The Church, A Unity Of Believers

We believe that all who are united to the risen and ascended Son of God are members of the church which is the body and bride of Christ, which began at Pentecost and is completely distinct from Israel. Its members are constituted as such regardless of membership or nonmembership in the organized churches of earth. We believe that by the same Spirit all believers in this age are baptized into, and thus become, one body that is Christ's, whether Jews or Gentiles, and having become members one of another, are under solemn duty to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, rising above all sectarian differences, and loving one another with a pure heart fervently (Matt. 16:16–18; Acts 2:42–47; Rom. 12:5; 1 Corinthians 12:12–27; Eph. 1:20–23; 4:3–10; Col. 3:14–15).

Section 14—The Sacraments Or Ordinances

We believe that water baptism and the Lord's Supper are the only sacraments and ordinances of the church and that they are a scriptural means of testimony for the church in this age (Matt. 28:19; Luke 22:19–20; Acts 10:47–48; 16:32–33; 18:7–8; 1 Corinthians 11:26).

Section 15—The Christian Walk

We believe that we are called with a holy calling, to walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, and so to live in the power of the indwelling Spirit that we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. But the flesh with its fallen, Adamic nature, which in this life is never eradicated, being with us to the end of our earthly pilgrimage, needs to be kept by the Spirit constantly in subjection to Christ, or it will surely manifest its presence in our lives to the dishonor of our Lord (Rom. 6:11–13; 8:2, 4, 12–13; Gal. 5:16–23; Eph. 4:22–24; Col. 2:1–10; 1 Pet. 1:14–16; 1 John 1:4–7; 3:5–9).

Section 16—The Christian’s Service

We believe that divine, enabling gifts for service are bestowed by the Spirit upon all who are saved. While there is a diversity of gifts, each believer is energized by the same Spirit, and each is called to his own divinely appointed service as the Spirit may will. In the apostolic church there were certain gifted men—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers—who were appointed by God for the perfecting of the saints unto their work of the ministry. We believe also that today some men are especially called of God to be evangelists, pastors and teachers, and that it is to the fulfilling of His will and to His eternal glory that these shall be sustained and encouraged in their service for God (Rom. 12:6; 1 Corinthians 12:4–11; Eph. 4:11).

We believe that, wholly apart from salvation benefits which are bestowed equally upon all who believe, rewards are promised according to the faithfulness of each believer in his service for his Lord, and that these rewards will be bestowed at the judgment seat of Christ after He comes to receive His own to Himself (1 Corinthians 3:9–15; 9:18–27; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

Section 17—The Great Commission

We believe that it is the explicit message of our Lord Jesus Christ to those whom He has saved that they are sent forth by Him into the world even as He was sent forth of His Father into the world. We believe that, after they are saved, they are divinely reckoned to be related to this world as strangers and pilgrims, ambassadors and witnesses, and that their primary purpose in life should be to make Christ known to the whole world (Matt. 28:18–19; Mark 16:15; John 17:18; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:18–20; 1 Pet. 1:17; 2:11).

Section 18—The Blessed Hope

We believe that, according to the Word of God, the next great event in the fulfillment of prophecy will be the coming of the Lord in the air to receive to Himself into heaven both His own who are alive and remain unto His coming, and also all who have fallen asleep in Jesus, and that this event is the blessed hope set before us in the Scripture, and for this we should be constantly looking (John 14:1–3; 1 Corinthians 15:51–52; Phil. 3:20; 1 Thessalonians. 4:13–18; Titus 2:11–14).

Section 19—The Tribulation

We believe that the translation of the church will be followed by the fulfillment of Israel’s seventieth week (Dan. 9:27; Rev. 6:1–19:21) during which the church, the body of Christ, will be in heaven. The whole period of Israel’s seventieth week will be a time of judgment on the whole earth, at the end of which the times of the Gentiles will be brought to a close. The latter half of this period will be the time of Jacob’s trouble (Jeremiah 30:7), which our Lord called the great tribulation (Matt. 24:15–21). We believe that universal righteousness will not be realized previous to the second coming of Christ, but that the world is day by day ripening for judgment and that the age will end with a fearful apostasy.

Section 20—The Second Coming Of Christ

We believe that the period of great tribulation in the earth will be climaxed by the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth as He went, in person on the clouds of heaven, and with power and great glory to introduce the millennial age, to bind Satan and place him in the abyss, to lift the curse which now rests upon the whole creation, to restore Israel to her own land and to give her the realization of God’s covenant promises, and to bring the whole world to the knowledge of God (Deut. 30:1–10; Isaiah 11:9; Ezek. 37:21–28; Matt. 24:15–25:46; Acts 15:16–17; Rom. 8:19–23; 11:25–27; 1 Tim. 4:1–3; 2 Tim. 3:1–5; Rev. 20:1–3).

Section 21—The Eternal State

We believe that at death the spirits and souls of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation pass immediately into His presence and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the glorified body when Christ comes for His own, whereupon soul and body reunited shall be associated with Him forever in glory; but the spirits and souls of the unbelieving remain after death conscious of condemnation and in misery until the final judgment of the great white throne at the close of the millennium, when soul and body reunited shall be cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated, but to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power (Luke 16:19–26; 23:42; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 2 Thessalonians. 1:7–9; Jude 6–7; Rev. 20:11–15).

Article IV-The Church Board

Section 1-Composition

The church board of Directors, hereinafter referred to as the Board, shall consist of all Elders who have been duly elected and are then serving their term of office.

Section 2-Number

The number of Elders shall be no less than two and as many as the Board shall determine from time to time.

Section 3-General Powers

All the corporate powers and the ownership of all property of this corporation shall be vested in the Board. The Board shall have power to appoint, compensate and discharge officers and employees of the corporation and all persons, councils and committees designed to carry out the work of the corporation. All officers, employees of the corporation shall have such powers as may be delegated to them by the Board. The Board shall have the power by and through its duly constituted officers to acquire, hold, use and dispose of property of the corporation.

Section 4-Manner of Acting

A majority of the Board at anytime and from time to time qualified and acting shall be deemed a quorum sufficient for the transaction of any and all business of the corporation; but if less than a majority of the Board members are present at any meeting, a majority of the Board members present may adjourn the meeting from time to time without further notice.

Section 5-Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Board shall be held with notice near the end of each year. At this meeting the Board membership shall be established and Board officers elected.

Section 6-Regular and special Meetings

The chairman of the Board shall be responsible for notifying all Board members of regular and special meetings. Notice of regular meetings may be established by the minutes of the meeting in which the regular meeting schedule is announced. Any Board member may waive notice of any meeting.

Article V-Officers

Section 1-Officers

The Board shall elect from among its membership a President and Vice-President and may make such other appointments as it shall deem desirable.

Section 2-Election and Term of Office

The officers of the corporation shall be elected annually by the Board at the annual meeting of the Board. If the election of officers is not held at such meeting, the election shall be held as soon thereafter as

convenient. New offices may be created and filled at any meeting of the Board. The term of office shall be on a calendar year basis. Each officer shall hold office until his successor shall have been duly elected and shall have qualified to serve.

Section 3-Vacancies

A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation or otherwise may be filled by the Board for the unexpired portion of the term.

Section 4-President

The President shall also be known as the Chairman and shall preside at all meetings of the Board and at any business session of the church. He shall have and exercise general charge and supervision of the corporation. He shall perform such other duties as may be assigned to him by the Board.

Section 5-Vice President

The Vice President shall also be known as the Vice-Chairman. At the request of the chairman or in the event of his absence or disability, the Vice-Chairman shall perform the duties and possess and exercise the powers of the Chairman.

Article VI-Elders

Section 1-Qualifications and Responsibility

The men serving as Elders shall be members of this church, of high Christian character and shall maintain an exemplary reputation in all aspects of their lives both in the church and in the world. They shall be both spiritual and temporal leaders of the church, and shall meet the qualifications and fulfill the responsibilities as set forth in Titus 1:5-9, 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and 1 Peter 5:1-3. They shall be responsible for overseeing the spiritual well-being and discipline of the church, and shall meet with the Pastor to provide counsel and prayer support for his ministry. Each elder shall understand and fully support the church's Bylaws and Doctrinal Statement.

Section 2-election and Tenure

The Elders shall be elected each year by the current Elders. New Elders shall be presented to the church body for recognition. Only present or past Elders or present Deacons shall be eligible to be elected to be Elders. Each Elder shall serve on a calendar year basis for a term of one year and until his successor has been duly elected by the Elders and has consented and qualified to act as such.

Section 3-Vacancies

Vacancies or additions to the Elders may be filled at any meeting of the elders by a two-thirds vote of the total number of Elders. An Elder or Elder Emeritus may be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of the total number of Elders.

Section 4-Elder Emeritus

A member of the Elders of Bethany Bible Church who has faithfully served ten or more years, upon retirement will, upon invitation of the Board and with his consent, become an Elder Emeritus and will retain that title so long as he is a member of the church. An Elder Emeritus will be welcome, in an advisory capacity, to attend all regular meetings and special meetings of the Board, and to receive minutes of such meetings.

Section 5-Past Elder

A man who has held the office of Elder but is presently not an Elder or Elder Emeritus, and has not been removed from office as provided for in Section 3 of this article, shall be considered a Past Elder.

Article VII-Deacons

Section 1-Responsibility and Qualifications

The Deacons shall assist the Elders of the church in the work of the ministry. Only men who are members of this church and who are of high Christian character and integrity, possessing the qualifications as given in Acts 6:3 and in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 shall be appointed as a Deacon. Each Deacon shall understand and fully support the church's Bylaws and Doctrinal Statement.

Section 2-Appointment and Tenure of Office

The Elders may appoint a Deacon to a specific task in the work of the ministry. The term of service shall be for not more than a calendar year of until the completion of the task. There shall be as many appointed Deacons as deemed necessary.

Article VIII-Ministerial Appointments

The Board shall appoint a Senior Pastor. Among his responsibilities shall be the staffing of other positions created by the Board to carry out the work of the ministry. The ministerial staff shall ascribe to the Bylaws and Doctrinal Statement of the church without reservation, and shall be in full agreement with the working polity and principles of the church. They shall have such powers and perform such acts and duties on behalf of the corporation as the Pastor may require. The Pastor shall have spiritual and administrative authority over the other ministers serving with him in the church.

Article IX-Membership

Section 1-Adult Membership

Active participants of Bethany shall be considered members when they complete a Membership application Form and are approved by the Elders. They will then be presented to the body as new members. It is suggested that they attend a basic Bible doctrine and church polity course approved by the Board and taught by one of the Pastoral Staff, an Elder or a Deacon.

Section 2-Termination

Membership in the church may terminate in any of the following ways:

- A. By death.
- B. By release. At his/her request the Board may remove a member's name from the church directory. If so desired a letter of standing shall be forwarded to the church with which he/she is uniting. A letter of standing will not be issued to an unspecified church.
- C. By inactivity. A member who fails to show interest for a period of six months shall be contacted by a Board member and made aware of his/her apparent failure in Christian duty. Unless he/she shows renewed interest within the following six months, that is after one year of inactivity, the Board may remove his name from the church directory (Hebrews 10:24-25).
- D. By exclusion. It is the right and in harmony with the Scriptures for the Board to exclude from fellowship in this church: (a) one who holds false and heretical doctrine or who lives inconsistently with Christian profession (Galatians 1:8-9); (b) one who violated the law of public morals or walks disorderly (2 Thessalonians 3:6, 11 and 1 Corinthians 5:11); or (c) one who would disturb the unity and peace of this church (Ephesians 4:1-3, Romans 14:19, 1 Corinthians 14:33, 1 Thessalonians 5:13-14).

Section 3-Christian Service Students

A member of the church upon indication of a specific evidence of a call into Christian service on an active vocational basis shall be encouraged to inform the Pastor and the Board of this call of the Lord. Upon approval by the board, his/her name shall be duly recorded as a "Christian Service Student" and he/she shall be encouraged by special prayer and guidance in preparation for Christian service. At the Annual

Meeting of the Board the record of each Christian Service Student shall be reviewed as to his/her progress in spiritual growth and education for Christian service. If progress is satisfactory, his/her name shall be retained for continued encouragement. If he/she no longer is pursuing a call to Christian service, his/her name shall be removed from this roll, the student shall be counseled accordingly. When a Christian Service Student enters active vocational service, the name shall be deleted from this roll and appropriate recognition shall be given to the servant of the Lord.

Section 4-Ordination

A male member of the church, upon giving evidence of the call of God to the Gospel ministry, may request ordination by this church. The Chairman of the Board, with the cooperation of the Pastor, shall appoint a special committee to convene an examination council, and if found acceptable, the candidate shall be ordained at an appropriate service.

Section 5-Congregational meetings

A meeting of the congregation shall be called by the Board during the month of February. Reports from the officers, ministerial staff and councils shall be made at this time. Special meetings of the congregation may be called by the Board as deemed necessary.

Article X-Organization

Section 1-Purpose

The Board shall appoint members and employees to positions of counsel, service, and authority in order to carry out the purposes and responsibilities of the church, to minister to the needs of the congregation, and to carry out the command of our Lord and Savior to “preach the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15), and to “make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19). The church organization shall provide for the functions of worship, fellowship, outreach, education, and administration to meet the needs of the entire church family, including children, youth, adults, and senior adults.

Section 2-Principles

- A. Only members of this church of high Christian character shall be appointed to positions of leadership and authority in the church organization. Such leaders shall have experienced regeneration through a personal trust in Christ and both understand and fully support the church’s Bylaws and Doctrinal Statement.
- B. The church organization shall be based n a strong combination of both ministerial and lay leadership. Laymen shall be used wherever possible in positions of authority, counsel, and service, working closely with the ministerial staff.
- C. The Board shall have final authority for the church organization and its operation in all matters.

Section 3-Organization and Policy Manual

When needed, the Board shall establish and maintain an Organization and Policy Manual to provide a clear definition of authority and responsibility in the church organization. The church Organization and Policy Manual shall include organization charts, definition of authority and responsibility, meeting requirements for committees and councils, reporting procedures, policies, job descriptions, and any other information the Board deems necessary for operation of the church program.

Section 4-Missionary Aims and Policy Manual

The Board shall establish and maintain a Missionary Aims and Policy Manual to provide a clear definition of the aims, authority and responsibility for carrying out the church missionary program. The missionary Aims and Policy Manual shall establish operation procedures for the church missionary organization in the areas of missionary candidates, short-term missionary service, mission boards, mission support, and mission stewardship.

Section 5-Christian School Ministry

In keeping with our commitment to disciple and educate children and young people, we commit ourselves as a corporation to the ministry of Christian education. The Board shall establish and oversee a Christian school ministry that is in keeping with the purposes, philosophy, and operational concepts as spelled out in the Bylaws and Doctrinal Statement. The Board shall approve the philosophy of ministry, operational handbooks, schedule of fees, and the enrollment process of the school.

Section 6-Policy Adoption and Amendment

The Organization and Policy Manual and the Missionary Aims and Policy manual may be adopted or amended at any regular or special meeting of the Board, by affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present.

Section 7-Powers Reserved to the Board

The Organization and Policy manual will define levels of approval authority in the church. Approval authority is reserved to the Board for:

- A. Acceptance of new members.
- B. Removal of members.
- C. Purchase or sale of real property.
- D. Establishment of separate funds to control the use of designated funds.
- E. Transfer of moneys between established funds.
- F. Use of a donation for a purpose not designated by the donor without the donor's consent.
- G. Calling or dismissing the Senior Pastor.

Article XI-Amendments to Bylaws and Doctrinal Statement

The Board shall have power to alter and amend these Bylaws and Doctrinal Statement by a vote of a majority of all Board members at any regular or any duly called special meeting of the Board, but notice of intention to amend shall be given to all members of the Board at least thirty days prior to the time of the meeting at which time the amendment will be considered.