

CHURCH CONSTITUTION

REVISED October 2000



CONSTITUTION
University Baptist Church
San Antonio, Texas

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Resolved, that this organization is organized and shall be operated for the purpose of engaging in religious worship and promoting the spiritual development and well being of individuals. Its assets are pledged for use in performing its religious functions. On discontinuance of this organization by dissolution or otherwise, its assets are to be transferred to a religious or charitable organization that is qualified as an exempt organization under Section 501 (c) (3), Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended.

ARTICLE I: Organization and Objective

Section 1. **NAME**: This body is a corporation under charter by the State of Texas known as the University Baptist Church of San Antonio, Texas, located at 6465 Babcock Road.

Section 2. **POLITY AND RELATIONSHIPS**: This church is an independent, autonomous, self-governing body.

- A. This corporation is organized without capital stock, and it is not organized for profit.
- B. The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. The will of its membership on any subject is expressed by a three-fourths (3/4)-majority vote of those in attendance at a duly constituted business meeting.
- C. This church is subject to no other ecclesiastical body, but insofar as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the San Antonio Baptist Association, the Baptist General Convention of Texas, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Section 3. **OBJECTIVE**: The objectives of this church will be:

- A. To establish a center of worship, prayer and fellowship where God encounters the people of our community.
- B. To faithfully and enthusiastically share the Good News of God's love in Jesus Christ from our community to the ends of the earth through our personal involvement in collective support of missions.
- C. To build a strong faith in the Lord Jesus Christ into our congregation through preaching, teaching, and personal application of God's word under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

ARTICLE II: Membership

Section 1. **GENERAL**: The membership shall consist of professed believers in Jesus Christ who have been baptized under the authority of a duly recognized church of like faith and order.

Section 2. **RECEPTION INTO MEMBERSHIP**: Persons shall be received into the membership of the church by vote of those present in the next regular business meeting upon one of the following conditions:

- A. **PROFESSION OF FAITH AND BAPTISM**: Upon evidence of regeneration by public profession of faith in Jesus Christ, and submission to baptism.
- B. **CHURCH LETTER**: Presentation of church letter of recommendation from another duly recognized church of like faith and order which adheres to the

fundamental doctrines as accepted by this church. Candidacy for membership may be made with the church letter in hand or upon promise of such church letter. Membership becomes effective upon receipt of the church letter by the church clerk

- C. **STATEMENT:** A candidate for membership may make a statement of faith, baptism, and church membership when for any unavoidable reason a church letter cannot be obtained.
- D. **RESTORATION:** Any person whose membership has been terminated for any offense may be restored by a vote of those present upon evidence of their repentance and reformation.

*Should there be any dissent as to any candidate such dissent shall be referred to the deacons for investigation and the making of a recommendation to the church within thirty (30) days.

Section 3. **DISCIPLINE:** All members shall recognize the authority of the church and their accountability as members to it. The church shall have the right to administer, reprove or to withdraw fellowship as may be required.

- A. In all personal offenses the members shall be guided in their conduct by the provisions of Matthew 18:15-17. In all public offenses the members shall be counseled according to the principles as stated in I Corinthians 5 and Galatians 6:1.
- B. While every member has a right to present disciplinary cases directly to the church, he or she is urged in the interest of harmony to first bring the matter to the attention of the Pastor and/or deacons for counsel and guidance.
- C. All matters of a disciplinary nature affecting the fellowship of the church must be commenced and concluded at a regular business meeting, or at a special business meeting, duly convened and appointed for that purpose. No member shall have church action brought against him/her unless he/she shall have at least ten (10) days prior notice in writing of the charge and have an opportunity to be present and be heard in his/her own defense.

Section 4. **TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP:** Membership shall be terminated in one of the following ways:

- A. Death of the member
- B. Upon joining another Baptist Church
- C. Exclusion by action of this church
- D. Upon becoming affiliated with a church of another faith or denomination.

Section 5. **CHURCH COVENANT:** The membership of this church accepts the principles of Christian conduct as set forth in the standard Church Covenant published by Broadman Supplies, code 4383-12 and replacements.

ARTICLE III: Officers and Organization

Section 1. **GENERAL CHURCH OFFICERS:** Officers of the church shall be the Pastor, church staff, deacons, trustees, moderator, clerk and treasurer.

A. **PASTOR:** The Pastor is responsible for leading the church in functioning as a New Testament Church.

1. Responsibilities:

- a. The major responsibilities of the Pastor shall be to lead the church in worship, proclamation, education, administration, and pastoral ministry.
- b. The Pastor shall have the sole responsibility of selecting his staff. Authority is also given to him by the church to determine the job responsibilities of each staff member, and when necessary the responsibility of terminating any particular position or personnel. The Pastor will be accountable to the church for his administrative actions.

2. Selection:

- a. A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church when a vacancy occurs. The deacons will nominate a pulpit committee consisting of five (5) persons, three men and two women, to be voted on by the church. The pulpit committee shall seek a pastor and their recommendation will constitute a nomination. Only one nomination at a time may be brought to the church for consideration.
- b. Election shall be by secret ballot. A vote of members present shall be necessary for extending a call. Written and public notice shall be given to the resident membership at least one week prior to meeting for election.

3. **Service:** The Pastor shall serve indefinitely until the relationship is terminated by his request, or the church requests his resignation upon a vote of members present in a duly constituted business meeting. Written and public notice shall be given to the resident membership at least one week prior to the business meeting.

B. **CHURCH STAFF:** The Church staff consists of vocational staff personnel other than the Pastor. The church will approve staff positions when the need for the position is determined.

1. **Responsibilities:** Each staff member is directly responsible to the Pastor or designated supervisor. In the event that the church is without a pastor, the staff that was under his direct supervision shall become responsible to the church. (See Article III, Section 1.)

2. **Selection and Service** - See Article III, Section 1.

C. **DEACONS:** There shall be active deacons recognizing their role as servants of the church. Qualifications for service as a Deacon are specified in I Timothy 3:8-13. Subject to a minimum of eight (8), the size of the Active Body shall be the number, determined by the Pastor and the Deacon Chairman, required to effectively administer the Deacon Ministry Program.

1. **Responsibilities:** The deacons shall serve under the leadership of and

with the Pastor in accordance with the teachings of the Scriptures as follows:

- a. To lead the church in the achievement of its mission.
 - b. To minister the gospel to believers and unbelievers.
 - c. To care for the church's members and others in the community.
 - d. To be an example in stewardship by committing at least the tithe (10%) in support of the financial program of the church.
 - e. To demonstrate Christian consecration, loyalty and faithfulness to the total church program.
 - f. To assist the staff in providing New Member Orientation and follow-up training for new Christians.
 - g. To investigate candidates for membership as referred to it in accordance with Article II, Section 2.
 - h. To be responsible for preparing the elements of the Lord's Supper.
2. **Selection:** Candidates for Deacon ordination shall be selected in accordance with the policies of this church and approved in a regular Business Meeting.
3. **Service:** Service shall be on a three-year rotation system. At that time the deacon will determine if he will allow his name to be placed for nomination and re-election to another three-year term. If he chooses to rotate off as an active deacon, one year must pass before he can be elected to serve again. Three (3) consecutive, un-notified absences from regular deacon's meeting shall automatically cause a deacon's term to be terminated.
- D. **TRUSTEES:** The church shall annually elect a minimum of three trustees to serve as legal officers for the church. Following authorized action by the church, they shall act on behalf of the church in regard to all legal matters where their signature is requested.
- E. **MODERATOR:** The Pastor shall serve as moderator of the church. In the absence of the Pastor the chairman of the Deacons shall preside. In the absence of both, the church clerk shall call the church to order and an acting moderator will be elected.
- F. **CLERK:** The church clerk shall be elected annually by the church. The clerical responsibilities shall be to keep a suitable record of all official action of the church. A membership role with dates of admission and dismissal will be maintained in the church office.
- G. **TREASURER:** The church shall annually elect a church treasurer as its financial officer. A person may not serve more than two consecutive years as church treasurer. The Treasurer shall disburse funds upon the authority of the church budget or upon action of the church following a recommendation from the Finance Committee by signing checks prepared by the Records Secretary. In the absence of the Treasurer, checks may be signed by an Authorized check Signer on the approval of the Finance Committee Chairman or Finance Committee member designated by him. The Treasurer shall assist the Records Secretary in posting and balancing the Church financial records as needed.

Section 2. **EMPLOYEES**: All positions of employment other than the Pastor and church staff will be authorized by the church, and employed under the direction of the Pastor.

Section 3. **ORGANIZATIONS**:

- A. **TEACHING & TRAINING**: All organizations for teaching and training shall be maintained at the will of the church. Officers, teachers, and workers in all such organizations shall be elected annually by the church, with regular reports from these organizations being made to the church. The Sunday School Director shall submit all Division/Department Directors and Teachers to the church for approval.
- B. **CHURCH COUNCIL**: Shall be composed of the Staff, Chairman of the Deacons, Committee Chairs, Sunday School Director, Discipleship Training Director, Auxiliary Directors and other organizational directors with an open invitation to all church members.
 - 1. **Meeting**: The Council shall meet at the discretion of the Pastor.
 - 2. **Function**:
 - a. Consider and coordinate events to be calendared by the organizations and ministries of the church. Conduct post-event evaluations.
 - b. Items presented that are under the jurisdiction of a committee will be referred to that committee. If such a committee can not be found, the Council may:
 - (1) If of a nonrecurring nature, prepare a recommendation to be presented at a business meeting.
 - (2) If of a recurring nature, request the Nominating Committee establish a committee.
 - c. At the option of a Committee Chair or other Council members, The council shall be available for consultation and guidance. Approval of reports and recommendations shall be made in a business meeting.

Section 4. **OTHER POSITIONS & ACTIVITIES**:

- A. **AUTHORIZED CHECK SIGNERS**: On recommendation of the Nominating Committee, the Church may authorize additional persons, not to exceed five, to sign checks in the Treasurer's absence (see Art. III, Sec. 1, Par. 7) or when dual signatures are required.
- B. **FINANCIAL REPORT**: The Finance Committee shall prepare and present a financial report at the monthly business meeting.
- C. **AUDIT**: The Nominating Committee shall appoint, subject to approval in monthly business meeting, an Auditor or Audit Committee who shall audit the Church's financial records and present an annual report in the monthly business meeting. This audit may be waived on the unanimous recommendation of all Trustees and approved in monthly business meeting. Except for fraud, volunteer auditors or audit committee members or Trustees will not bear financial responsibility for errors in the audit or for waiving an audit.

ARTICLE IV: Committees

Section 1. **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**: The church shall have a nominating committee. It shall be composed of a minimum of five (5) members who will be elected annually by the church.

A. **FUNCTION**:

1. To prayerfully research and consider and nominate personnel for the staffing of the following leadership positions filled by volunteer workers: treasurer, authorized check signers, auditor (if there is no audit committee), clerk, trustees, Sunday School Director, Discipleship Training Director, WMU Director, Brotherhood Director, standing and special committees.
2. To annually review and update the committee manual.
3. To assist the staff in planning and promoting annual committee orientation.
4. To lead the committees to regularly evaluate their effectiveness and necessity.
5. Any member of the church may submit names to the committee for consideration.
6. To report to the church its nominations for elections.

B. **SELECTION**: The Nominating Committee shall be recommended to the church for election by the previous committee in the March business meeting. Two of the nominations shall be provided by the Church Council and the balance by the Nominating Committee.

C. **SERVICE**: The tenure of office of the nominating committee shall be from April 1 to March 31 inclusive of the year for which they are elected.

Section 2. **CHURCH COMMITTEES**

A. **FUNCTION**: The function and duties of each committee shall be in accordance with the policies of this church.

B. **SERVICE**: The tenure of office of all committees shall be from January 1st through December 31st unless otherwise specified.

ARTICLE V: Church Meetings

Section 1. **WORSHIP SERVICES**: The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday evening for the worship of the Almighty God. Prayer, praise, preaching, instruction and evangelism shall be among the ingredients of these services. The Pastor, or someone designated by the Pastor, shall direct the services for all the church members and for all others who may choose to attend.

Section 2. **SPECIAL SERVICES**: Revival services and any other church meetings essential to the advancement of the church's objectives shall be placed on the church calendar.

Section 3. **REGULAR BUSINESS MEETINGS**: The church shall hold regular business meetings on Wednesday night following the second Sunday of each month.

Section 4. **SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETING**: The church may conduct called business meetings to consider matters of a special nature and significance at any regular worship service. At least three days notice must be given for the specifically called business meeting. Announcement of such business meeting shall be made at two regular worship services preceding the business meeting. The notice shall include the subject, date, time and place of the called business meeting. No business shall be transacted except that specified in the call.

Section 5. **PARLIAMENTARY RULES**: Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, shall be used for the procedure of all business meetings of the church.

ARTICLE VI: Ordinances

Section 1. **BAPTISM**: Any one who personally receives Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord by faith, and who professes Him publicly at any worship service, shall be received for baptism.

- A. Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
- B. Baptism shall be administered during any worship service by the Pastor or someone else authorized by the church.
- C. Candidates for baptism shall be properly instructed as to the meaning, method and manner of baptism.

Section 2. **LORD'S SUPPER**: The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of worship whereby Christians commemorate the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His Second Coming.

- A. The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least quarterly (preferably the first Sunday of each quarter).
- B. The Pastor and deacons shall administer the Lord's Supper in the morning or evening worship service.
- C. The deacons shall be responsible for preparing the elements of the Lord's Supper.

ARTICLE VII: Amendments

This constitution may be amended by a vote of members present at a regular business meeting. A written copy of the proposed amendment must be presented to the membership not less than one regular monthly business meeting prior to the action on the same.

ARTICLE VIII: Amendments to the Constitution

AMENDMENT I:

Statement of Purpose: “Resolve, that this organization is organized and shall be operated for the purpose of engaging in religious worship and promoting the spiritual development and well-being of individuals. Its assets are pledged for use in performing its religious functions. On discontinuance of this organization by dissolution or otherwise, its assets are to be transferred to a religious or charitable organization that is qualified as an exempt organization under Section 501 (c) (3), Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended.”

(Special business meeting 1-10-82)

AMENDMENT II:

Amendment to **ARTICLE III: Officers and Organization**, Section 1, Part E: **Moderator:** The Pastor shall serve as moderator of the church, In the absence of the Pastor the chairman of the Deacons shall preside. In the absence of both, the church clerk shall call the church to order and an acting moderator will be elected.

(6-12-96)

AMENDMENT III:

Section 3: Amendment to **ARTICLE IV: Committees**, Section 1. **NOMINATING COMMITTEE:** Paragraph C. **SERVICE:** The tenure of office of the nominating committee shall be from May 1 to April 30 inclusive of the year for which they are elected. (1-13-99)

AMENDMENT IV:

Section 1: Amendment to **Article V**, Section 3, **REGULAR BUSINESS MEETINGS:** The Church shall hold regular quarterly business meetings on Wednesday night following the second Sunday in the first month of each quarter. (January, April, July, October.

AMENDMENT V:

Section 2: **PROCEDURES FOR MAKING AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION:** A Written copy of the proposed amendment must be presented to the Membership 30 days prior to the action on the same in a special called or regularly scheduled business meeting.

