

BYLAWS

**Central Baptist Church
Italy, Texas**

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PROPOSED BYLAWS
Central Baptist Church
Italy, Texas

Preamble

The development of these bylaws has been guided by three (3) basic Christian principles: 1) All persons have an equal right to direct access to God; 2) All believers have a right to equal privileges in the church; and 3) To be responsible the soul must be free.

The intent of these bylaws is that they allow for smooth operation of the church. They are not to be interpreted in such a strict manner as to encumber the work of the Holy Spirit or impose any undue restrictions on church activity.

Article I Church Membership

1. General

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. This membership is to be self-governed in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of the church. The membership determines who shall be members of the church and the conditions of membership. The membership shall be those persons whose names are duly inscribed on the church membership roll.

2. Candidacy

A. Any person may become a candidate for membership in this church. All such candidates shall be presented to the church for membership in any of the following ways:

- 1) By profession of faith in Jesus Christ and receiving baptism by immersion.
- 2) By promise of a letter of recommendation from another Baptist church of like faith and practice.
- 3) By statement of prior conversion experience and believer's baptism by immersion.
- 4) Any former member whose membership has been terminated because of some offense may be restored to full membership upon satisfactory evidence of repentance and reformation by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting.
- 5) If a person desires membership in this church, but is unable to present himself/herself publicly for some reason, the church may receive such a person in absentia when recommended by the pastor and/or deacons provided one of the conditions set forth previously is met.

- B. Should there be any dissent as to any candidate, such dissent shall be brought to the attention and counsel of the pastor and deacons, and if not resolved, then to the church at the next business meeting. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting shall be required to approve such candidates for membership.

3. Membership Classification

- A. The term resident member shall apply to those members whose permanent and legal residences are in Ellis County or in counties immediately adjacent to Ellis County.
- B. The term nonresident member shall apply to those members whose permanent and legal residences are neither in Ellis County nor in counties immediately adjacent to Ellis County.

4. Privileges of Members

- A. A person must be a member of the church to participate in the business of the church or to vote on matters of business before the church.
- B. Each member shall be entitled to one vote on each matter of business before the church and must be present at the business meeting where such matters of business are being voted on.
- C. Absentee voting by members may be permitted when specifically authorized by the church.

5. Discipline of Members

- A. It shall be the basic purpose of this church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist in any trouble of its members. The pastor, other members of the ministerial staff, and the deacons are available for counsel and guidance. Redemption, rather than punishment, shall be the guideline which governs the attitude of one member toward another.
- B. Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, every reasonable measure will be taken by the pastor and the deacons to resolve the problem in accordance with Matthew 18. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance. But, finding that the welfare of the church will best be served by exclusion of the member, the church membership, upon recommendation of the pastor and the deacons, may take this action by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting at a meeting called for this purpose. The church may proceed to declare the member to be no longer in membership of this church.

- C. Any member whose membership has been terminated for any condition which has made it necessary for the church to exclude him/her may, upon his/her request, be restored to membership by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the church upon evidence of his/her repentance and reformation.

6. Termination of Membership

- A. Death of the member. Transfer of membership at the request of another Baptist church.
- B. Erasure upon request of the member, or proof of membership in another church.
- C. Exclusion by action of this church as set forth previously under Article 1 Church membership, paragraph 5 - Discipline of Members.
- D. A process to update and certify the membership may be conducted periodically.

Article II Church Corporate Leadership

The corporate officers of the church, a non-profit corporation, must all be members of the church and include a moderator, a clerk, a treasurer, and trustees, and shall be elected annually.

1. **Moderator** - The moderator and chief executive officer shall be the pastor. He is responsible to the membership for the operation of the church as a non-profit corporation. The chairman of the deacons shall be the vice-moderator, and serve in the absence of the moderator.
2. **Clerk** - The clerk shall be responsible for keeping an accurate and complete record of all business transacted by the church. A copy of all recorded transactions shall be filed in the church office. Part or all of these functions may be performed by an employed secretary of the church.
3. **Treasurer** - The treasurer shall be responsible for receiving, counting, banking, recording, disbursing, reporting and auditing all monies received by the church. A copy of all recorded transactions shall be filed in the church office. Part or all of these functions may be performed by an employed secretary of the church.
4. **Trustees** - Three trustees shall be responsible for serving as the representatives of the church in all legal matters. The trustees will serve as a committee with a job description and administrative guidelines outlined in the Church Operations Manual.

Article III General Church Leadership

The general leaders of the church shall all be members of the congregation, and serve at the pleasure of the church. These leaders include the pastor, the ministerial staff, the deacons, and the church council.

1. Pastor

- A. The pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. He will lead the congregation, the organizations, and the church staff in the performance of their tasks. The pastor is leader of pastoral ministries in the church. He works with the deacons, the church council, and the church staff to lead the church in the accomplishment of its mission, proclaim the gospel to believers and non-believers, and care for the church's members and other persons in the community. A job description will be maintained in the Church Operations Manual.
- B. When a vacancy in the position of pastor occurs, the Church Council shall enlist supply preachers and recommend to the church the procedure for electing an Interim Pastor Search Committee. When elected by the church, the interim pastor shall assume all or part of the pastoral duties until the position of pastor is filled.
- C. At a time deemed appropriate by the Church Council, it will lead the church in selecting a Pastor Search Committee. This committee will seek out a candidate to serve as the new pastor. When the committee has made its selection, the new pastoral candidate will be invited to preach in view of a call. Following the service in which he preaches, an election shall be conducted by ballot, and an eighty percent (80%) affirmative vote of those present and voting will constitute a call.
- D. The pastor shall be called for an indefinite term of service. Should the pastor or the church desire to terminate the pastoral relationship, the party desiring such change shall give the other a written notice of at least thirty days unless otherwise agreed by the Personnel Committee.

2. Other Ministerial Staff

- A. The ministerial staff shall be called when the church, upon recommendation from the pastor and Personnel Committee, determines the need. Job descriptions shall be recommended for approval by the church, and shall be maintained in the Church Operations Manual.
- B. Selection and termination procedures shall be the same as those for the pastor.

3. Deacons

- A. Qualifications The scriptural qualifications shall be those as outlined in Acts 6 and 1 Timothy 3. No person shall be elected as a Deacon who has not been a member of Central Baptist Church in good standing for at least one year. A Deacon must be a tither through this church.
- B. Number The number of Deacons to be elected for service at any one time shall be at a ratio of one Deacon for a maximum of 10-12 resident families.
- C. Rotation
- 1) A Deacon shall remain in active status as long as he annually indicates his desire and commitment to serve, is regular in attendance at the Deacon's meetings, and participates in the ministries of the Deacon Body. If a Deacon is absent from six (6) consecutive Deacon's meetings without acceptable explanation, he will be declared inactive and a replacement will be sought.
 - 2) There are some instances when a Deacon feels it is necessary for him to become inactive for a period of time. When such an instance occurs, the Deacon in question shall notify the Deacon Chairman of his intention to become inactive. If possible, an estimated time of inactivity shall be given. As long as his inactive service does not exceed one (1) year, he will be given opportunity to reactivate himself at a regular Deacon's meeting.
 - 3) If a Deacon exceeds one (1) year of inactive service, he may be declared active again after notifying the Deacon Chairman of his desire, meeting with the Pastor and the Deacon Chairman for an updated orientation, and is approved by a 2/3 vote of the quorum present at a regular Deacon's meeting.
 - 4) Deacon Emeritus: When a Deacon is unable to regularly participate in the meetings and activities of Deacon service due to age or health restrictions, he may request the status of "Deacon Emeritus", which exempts him from regular duties without affecting his voluntary participation in Deacon activities and/or voting privileges in Deacon's meetings. Alternatively, when the need is seen, the Deacon Body may approach the Deacon in question as to whether he would like to enter into the status of Deacon Emeritus.
- D. Election In order to provide additions and replacements, selection and election will be made by the church. The process will be as follows:
- 1) A ballot of the men who have been members of Central Baptist Church, Italy for at least one (1) year, who are at least 18 years old, and who are not serving in a ministerial staff position at CBC, and a list of Deacon qualifications as outlined in Article III.3.A. will be presented to the church at least two weeks prior to the scheduled Sunday Service at which voting is to occur.
 - 2) Voting by ballot will be for the number of Deacons needed according to Article III.3.B. The number of candidates needed for service will be selected from the top five church-identified nominees until the positions are filled or when the top five names have been exhausted. The moderator will select two members to tally the votes.
 - 3) The candidate(s) meeting the above voting requirements will be contacted by the Deacon Chairman to ascertain their desire to proceed. Those who do will be required to complete the Deacon Questionnaire.
 - 4) The Pastor and the Deacon Officers will interview the candidate(s) to determine those who meet the qualifications set forth in III.3.A.
 - 5) The qualified candidate(s) will be required to complete the Deacon Orientation.

- 6) The qualified candidate(s) who successfully complete the above steps and who continue to express a desire to serve as a Deacon will be presented to the Deacon Body at a regular Deacon's meeting for approval by a 2/3 vote of a quorum of the Deacons present.
 - 7) The approved candidate(s) will be presented by the Deacon Body at a Family Meeting for final confirmation which will require an affirmative vote of 2/3 of the membership present and voting.
 - 8) The confirmed candidate(s) will be presented to the church for ordination.
 - 9) If an individual has previously served as a Deacon in another Southern Baptist Convention church and desires to actively serve at Central Baptist Church, Italy, the following process shall apply:
 - a) The person in question must have been a member of Central Baptist Church, Italy for at least one (1) year.
 - b) The person in question must notify the Pastor and/or the Deacon Chairman of his desire to serve.
 - c) The Deacon Body must agree to the need for an additional Deacon and the timing of his activation.
 - d) The candidate must complete the Deacon Questionnaire.
 - e) The candidate must meet with the Pastor and the Deacon Officers to determine if he meets the qualifications set forth in III.3.A.
 - f) The candidate must complete the Deacon Orientation.
 - g) The candidate who successfully completes the above steps and continues to express a desire to serve will be presented to the Deacon Body at a regular Deacon's meeting for approval by a 2/3 vote of a quorum of the Deacons present.
 - h) The approved candidate will be presented by the Deacon Body at a Family Meeting for final confirmation which will require an affirmative vote of 2/3 of the membership present and voting.
- E. Officers In August of each year, the Deacon Body shall elect a chairman, vice-chairman, secretary, and any other officers as it may deem necessary to carry out its ministry. Job descriptions of duties of the officers shall be maintained in the Church Operations Manual.
- F. Duties It shall be the duty of the Deacons to visit the membership of the church and to encourage the members in Christian worship, service, and stewardship. They shall endeavor to promote peace, harmony, and the spirit of cooperation among the members. They shall be responsible for assisting the pastor in conducting the ordinances of the church. A job description of the duties and responsibilities of Deacons shall be maintained in the Church Operations Manual.

4. **Church Council**

The Church Council shall be chaired by the pastor and include the ministerial staff, the chairman of deacons, the director of each church program organization, and the director of each church ministry. Persons serve on the Church Council by virtue of their election to leadership positions identified above.

- A. Principal Function The Church Council is responsible to the church for leading the congregation in vision, direction, oversight, and accountability.

- B. Duties The Church Council shall meet regularly to plan, conduct and evaluate the entire ministry of the church. It shall lead the church to discover God's vision, find God's direction, develop and communicate God's plan, and lead in the implementation of God's plan for the church. The Church Council shall oversee the calendaring of all church sponsored activities as well as non-church sponsored events.

Article IV Church Committees

1. Types of Committees

This church shall elect permanent and temporary committees upon recommendation from the Church Council. Permanent committees are ongoing committees and temporary committees are those that are discontinued when their specific task is completed. All church approved committees will be included in the Church Operations Manual.

2. Selection of Committee Members

All committee members shall be nominated for election by the Nominating Committee. No person may serve on more than one permanent committee at a time.

3. Responsibilities of Committees

Job descriptions for all committees shall be maintained in the Church Operations Manual.

4. Rotation of Committees

Permanent committees shall follow a system of member rotation as outlined in the Church Operations Manual.

5. Committees Differ From Ministry Teams

A basic difference between a committee function and a ministry team function is that committees are primarily concerned with policy and decision making tasks, whereas ministry teams are concerned with doing ministry. In addition, ministry teams may vary in size from one person to several team members.

Article V Church Coordinating Councils

Each church program organization and each church ministry shall have a coordinating council. Each coordinating council is composed of the director of the organization or ministry, and other specific workers within each organization or ministry as defined as follows:

1. Bible Study/Discipleship Council

This council is composed of the Preschool Division Director, the Children's Division Director, the Youth Division Director, the Adult Division Director, and the Outreach Director, and is chaired by the Bible Study/Discipleship Director. This council will plan, conduct, and coordinate the program of Bible Study and Discipleship.

2. Missions Council

This council is composed of the Mission Friends Director, the Girls Auxiliary Director, the Royal Ambassador Director, the Acteen Director, the Women on Missions Director, and the Baptist Men's Director. This council is chaired by the Missions Director and will plan, conduct, and coordinate the missions program and ministry of the church.

3. Music Council

This council is composed of the Adult Choir Director, the Children's Choir Director, the Church Pianist, and the Church Organist, and is chaired by the Minister of Music. This council will plan, conduct, and coordinate the music program and ministry of the church.

4. Youth Council

This council is composed of two Junior High students, four Senior High students, and four parents of Junior and Senior High students, and is chaired by the Minister of Youth. Workers with youth in the Bible Study/Discipleship program will serve as advisors to the youth council, but will have no voting privileges. The members of this council are selected and elected by the youth themselves. This council will plan, conduct, and coordinate the ministry for the youth in the church.

5. Deacon Council

This council is composed of the deacon officers, and chaired by the deacon chairman. This council leads in planning, conducting, and coordinating the ministry of deacons in the church.

Article VI Church Program Organizations

1. Program Organizations

The church shall encourage programs consistent with its purpose and mission statement. All such organizations shall be approved by the church and under church control. All officers and teachers shall be members of the church, elected by the church, and accountable to the church. All program activities shall be coordinated and approved by the church. The church shall provide the human resources, the physical resources, and the financial resources for the appropriate functioning of these programs.

The church shall have a Bible Study/Discipleship program, a Missions program, a Music program, and other programs as the church approves upon recommendation from the Church Council.

2. Program Leadership

Church program organizations shall be directed by either lay persons or ministerial staff members, and shall have organizations, officers, and workers as approved by the church.

Article VII Church Ministries

1. Provision For Church Ministries

Upon recommendation from the Church Council and church approval, the church shall provide various kinds of ministries as the needs arise. In addition to Deacon ministry, Prayer ministry, Senior Adult ministry, and Youth ministry, other ministries may include Children's ministry, Family ministries, etc.

2. Leadership For Church Ministries

The Nominating Committee will recommend the ministry leader. Once approved by the church, the ministry leader will involve as many team members as needed to accomplish the ministry. The church shall provide the human resources, the physical resources, and the financial resources for the appropriate functioning of these ministries. Job descriptions for the ministry teams shall be maintained in the Church Operations Manual.

Article VIII Church Meetings

1. The Church Calendar

The church calendar shall be the official schedule of events for the church. It will take precedence over any non-calendared event. The church calendar shall be recommended by the Church Council for church approval, and shall be maintained in the church office.

2. Worship Services

- A. The church shall schedule Sunday worship service(s).
- B. Additional services of worship may be held as the church directs.

3. Business Meetings (CBC Family Meeting)

- A. The church shall hold regular business meetings as scheduled on the Church Calendar.
- B. The moderator or vice-moderator may call a special business meeting provided all resident members are officially notified in writing at least one week prior to the meeting. The notice shall include the subject, the

time and place, and given in such manner that all resident members have opportunity to know of the meeting.

- C. All meetings will be conducted in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, unless otherwise specified by the church.
 - D. A quorum shall consist of those church members present and voting at a meeting.
 - E. Voting shall be by either raised hand, voice, paper ballot, or by absentee voting when authorized by the church.
- 4. Church Organizational Year**
- A. All organizations, committees, councils, and groups shall begin on September 1
 - B. The fiscal year for the church shall begin on January 1.
- 5. License To Preach**
- Any member of the church, who in the judgment of the church, gives evidence of having been called of God to the task of preaching, may be given a license to preach by the church upon church approval.
- 6. Ministerial Ordination**
- A service of ministerial ordination may be conducted whenever a church member has been called of God to serve a church as a vocational minister of the gospel. An ordaining council of pastors and deacons shall be convened to examine the candidate with respect to his Christian experience, his call to the ministry, and his views on Bible doctrine. If approved by the ordaining council and the church, the candidate shall be publicly set apart and ordained with prayer and the laying on of hands.

Article IX Church Ordinances

- 1. Baptism**
- The ordinance of baptism shall be immersion in water and given to any person who has received Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord. The pastor, or whomever the pastor or church authorizes, shall administer baptism during any worship service of the church.
- 2. Lord's Supper**
- The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be administered by the pastor and deacons regularly as scheduled on the church calendar. This ordinance is observed in remembrance of Jesus Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, and the spiritual birth of New Testament believers.

Article X Church Finances

1. The Church Budget

The Finance Committee shall prepare and submit to the church for approval a unified mission-oriented budget. The committee shall also provide general oversight of budget operations throughout the fiscal year. The church fiscal year shall be the calendar year.

2. A Record of All Funds

All funds received for any purpose shall be properly recorded by the treasurer of the church.

3. Financial Reports

The church treasurer shall provide a financial report each month. Copies of the report are to be available at church business meetings and upon request of church members.

4. Special Offerings

Offerings for non-budgeted items shall be limited to the special missions offerings for SSC and SGCT mission causes and love offerings for special guest speakers unless otherwise approved by the church.

Article XI Church Property

1. Use of Church Property

All church property—real property, buildings, equipment, vehicles, and furnishings—shall be used primarily for the needs and ministries of this church. Other uses may be granted by the pastor or the Properties and Space Committee.

2. Maintenance

Custodial services shall be provided as needed and as allocated for in the church budget. Supervision of custodial services shall be by the pastor. Repairs and maintenance shall be directed by the Properties and Space Committee.

3. Insurance

The Trustees of the church shall provide leadership in seeing that proper insurance coverage is maintained for all church properties.

Article XII Use of The Church Name

No use shall be made of the church name without the approval of the church.

Article XIII Church Operations Manual

1. Preparation and Maintenance of the Church Operations Manual

An operations manual shall be prepared, maintained, and approved by the church. It shall describe the administrative procedures for the church staff, the church financial services, program leadership, and church ministries. It shall identify the permanent committees of the church, how their membership is selected, the size and job description of each committee, and how the terms of members on each committee is staggered. It shall specify, as needed, the church ministries, their purpose and make-up, how they are selected, and what they are to do. The manual shall provide job descriptions for all employees. It shall set out any other organizational or administrative matter of the church as is needed.

2. Annual Review of the Church Operations Manual

The Church Council shall review the manual at least annually, and recommend changes for church approval as needed.

3. Procedure for Revising the Church Operations Manual

Addition, revision, or deletion of church policies and procedures requires: 1) the recommendation of the church officer or organization to whose area of assignment the policy or procedure relates, 2) consideration and recommendation by the Church Council, and 3) a majority vote of approval by the church in any regular or special business meeting.

Concerns of church members that are not being addressed by those immediately responsible should be presented in writing to the Church Council for consideration.

Article XIV Amendments

The bylaws may be amended at any regular business meeting, or at a special business meeting called for that purpose, provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous business meeting. Each amendment to be approved shall require at least a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present and voting.

These Bylaws were unanimously approved by Central Baptist Church in a regular business meeting on May 12, 2004.

The Bylaws concerning Deacons (page 5) were edited and approved by Central Baptist Church in a regular business meeting on September 12, 2010.