

## Summary of Proposed Changes

All of the changes being proposed in both the constitution and bylaws seek to align the church's programs and ministry objectives to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. They reflect the expressed desires of our membership and align our governing documents with our current operations.

Changes to the constitution:

Section 3 identifies the church's statement of faith as the Baptist Faith and Message 1963. Given the cultural and ethical climate of today, the proposed changes identify the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 as the church's statement of faith, and articulates with clarity that it be the guiding force behind how the church interprets Scripture for the purposes of operations, policies, and procedures. The changes add clarity to the church's Scriptural understanding of the sanctity of life, marriage, sexual identity and purity, so that policies that reflect those beliefs can be defended if challenged. Facility usage, hiring practices, and membership guidelines in churches are all under attack by the proponents of the sexual revolution. Updating the language to reflect the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 as the church's statement of faith will help.

Section 6 defines the church covenant. The church covenant in principle is good, but it uses some language that should be updated. It seems to have come from the standard Broadman Church Covenant that is overly behavior specific and dates back to the time immediately following prohibition. The church covenant should reflect language of discernment, discretion, and restraint with regard to an overall understanding that the believer is to live carefully in this world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts accordingly. The proposed language provides the church with the ability to be consistent in the enforcement of church discipline across a broader area of behaviors. It removes language specific to the use of alcohol because while there are many dangers associated with the use of alcohol, it should not be considered a sinful violation of Scripture that warrants church discipline.

Section 7 defines the way the constitution can be amended. The church exists in an age where information can be made available without having to mail that information to last known addresses. Besides, if someone isn't actively engaged in the church enough to know that changes are being made to its governing documents, then they probably shouldn't have a voice in those changes.

Changes to the bylaws:

Article 3 deals with deacons. The proposed changes adds language related to the responsibilities of deacons. It also changes the deacon year from October – September to the calendar year so that they are in line with our committee and budget calendar. The proposal recommends updated language concerning the qualifications for deacons and provides some clarity for the vetting and election of deacons. The biggest change is the removal of language that automatically disqualifies a deacon because of a previous marriage by either him or his wife. It does not suggest that divorce

shouldn't be considered but that it should not automatically disqualify someone. The proposed changes add language related to the qualifications of the honorary position, Deacon Emeritus.

Article 5 for church officers changes the year of service from October – September to the calendar year.

Article 6 is the section on committees. The biggest change is the establishment of four standing committees (Nominating, Guidelines to Faith and Practice, Personnel, and Stewardship.) All of the other committees have been removed and reassigned into a new category called Ministry Teams. The church will continue to elect standing committee members and those committee members will continue to serve three-year terms. Ministry teams, however, will not be subject to church approval. Their leadership will be determined either by the staff or by the team itself. People will be able to serve on ministry teams indefinitely. Ministry teams will form and disband based on the needs of the church and the community it serves. The proposed changes include a new section that defines pastoral authority in appointing ad hoc committees.

Article 7 will be renamed from Program Organization to Ministry Objectives. Program organization made sense when every Southern Baptist church carried out the same programs to accomplish the same goals. The problem is that both the nature and the names of programs change. The proposed recommendation gives the church the flexibility to change current programs and develop new programs based on overall ministry objectives of the church, objectives that reflect a desire to advance the Great Commandment and Great Commission. The proposed recommendation removes program specific language like Sunday School, WMU, Brotherhood, Music Program, and Church Council and replaces it with ministry objectives of Worship, Community, Discipleship, and Missions.

Article 8 covers church meetings. The proposed language removes the Sunday evening service mandate and affords the church more flexibility in deciding its meeting times while maintaining Sundays and Wednesdays as the priority days for worship and study.