

**CONSTITUTION AND  
BYLAWS HEBRON BAPTIST  
CHURCH  
24063 LOUISIANA HIGHWAY 16  
DENHAM SPRINGS,**

**LA CONSTITUTION**

**Preamble**

We declare and establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the body in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual church member and the freedom of action of this body in relation to other churches.

**I. NAME**

This body shall be known as the **Hebron Baptist Church**, located at **24063 Louisiana Highway 16, Denham Springs, LA 70726**.

**II. OBJECTIVES**

To be a dynamic spiritual organism empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible in our church, community, and throughout the world.

To be a worshiping fellowship, experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing his person, and responding in obedience to his leadership.

To experience an increasingly meaningful fellowship with God and fellow believers. To help people experience a growing knowledge of God and man.

To be a church which ministers unselfishly to persons in the community and the world in Jesus' name.

To be a church whose purpose is to be Christlike in our daily living by emphasizing total commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the lordship of Christ.

**III. STATEMENT OF BASIC BELIEFS**

We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired word of God and the basis for our beliefs. This church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of The Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963. We voluntarily band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost humanity. The ordinances of the church are believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper. (See Article 6 of the Bylaws.)

**IV. CHURCH COVENANT**

Having been led as we believe by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God and this assembly most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, doctrines, and discipline; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, and the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all

nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotion; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale of and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to use our influence to combat the abuse of drugs, the spread of pornography, and the promotion of gambling; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will as soon as possible unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

## **V. POLITY AND RELATIONSHIPS**

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. Persons duly received by the members shall constitute the membership. (See Article I of the Bylaws.)

All internal groups created and empowered by the church shall report to and be accountable only to the church, unless otherwise specified by church action.

This church is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches. Insofar as is practical this church will cooperate with and support the association, the state convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

## **BYLAWS**

### **I. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

#### **Section 1. General**

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church.

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

#### **Section 2. Candidacy**

Any person may offer himself as a candidate for membership in this church. All such candidates shall be presented to the church at any regular church service for membership in any of the following ways:

1. By profession of faith and for baptism according to the policies of this church.
2. By promise of a letter of recommendation from another Baptist church.
3. By restoration upon a statement of prior conversion experience and baptism in a Baptist church when no letter is obtainable.
4. By statement of prior conversion experience and Baptism, according to the policies of this Church, from a Church of another evangelical denomination.

Should there be any dissent as to any candidate, such dissent shall be referred to the Deacon body for investigation and the making of a recommendation to the church within thirty (30) days. A three-fourths vote of those church members present and voting shall be required to elect such candidates to membership.

#### **Section 3. New Member Orientation**

New members of this church are expected and encouraged to participate in the church's new member orientation.

#### **Section 4. Rights of Members**

1. Every member of the church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference, provided the member is present or the church has made provision absentee balloting.
2. Every member of the church is eligible for consideration by the membership as candidates for elective offices in the church.
3. Every member of the church may participate in the ordinances of the church as administered by the church.

#### **Section 5. Termination of Membership**

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

1. Death of the member,
2. Transfer of letter to another Baptist church,
3. Exclusion by action of this church,
4. Erasure upon request of the individual member, or
5. Proof of membership in a church of another denomination.

#### **Section 6. Discipline**

It shall be the practice of this church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The pastor, other members of the church staff, and deacons are available

for counsel and guidance. The attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption rather than punishment.

Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, the pastor and the deacons will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accord with Matthew 18. If it becomes necessary for the church to take action to exclude a member, a two-thirds vote of the members present is required; and the church may proceed to declare the person to be no longer in the membership of the church. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance.

The church may restore to membership any person previously excluded, upon request of the excluded person, and by vote of the church upon evidence of the excluded person's repentance and reformation.

## II. CHURCH OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

All who serve as officers of the church and those who serve on church committees shall be members of this church.

### Section 1. Church Officers

The officers of this church shall be the pastor, the ministerial church staff, the deacons, a moderator, a clerk, a treasurer, and trustees.

1. The pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. The pastor will lead the congregation, the organizations, and the church staff to perform their tasks.

The pastor is leader of pastoral ministries in the church. As such he works with the deacons and church staff to: (1) lead the church in the achievement of its mission, (2) proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers, and (3) care for the church's members and other persons in the community.

A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. The election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's public notice has been given.

A pastor selection committee shall be elected by the church to seek out a suitable pastor, and its recommendations will constitute a nomination. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one name at a time. Election shall be by ballot, an affirmative vote of three fourths of those present being necessary for a choice. The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or the church's request. He shall preside at meetings of this church, and if so designated may serve as moderator in all business meetings in keeping with the rules of order authorized by these bylaws.

When he so feels led by God, the pastor may relinquish the office as pastor by giving at least two weeks' notice to the church at the time of his resignation.

Should some serious condition exist which would cause the pastor to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, and after every reasonable effort has been taken to resolve the problem in accord with Matthew 18, the church may declare the office of pastor to be vacant. Such action shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's public notice has been given. The meeting may be called upon the recommendation of a majority of the personnel committee and the deacons or by written petition signed by not less than one fourth of the resident church members. The moderator for this meeting shall be designated by the members present by majority vote, and he shall be someone other than the pastor. The vote to declare the office vacant shall be by secret ballot; an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present being necessary to declare the office vacant. Except in instances of gross misconduct by the pastor so excluded from office, the church will compensate the pastor with not less than one twelfth of his total annual compensation package. The termination shall be immediate and the compensation shall be rendered in not more than thirty days.

2. The **ministerial staff** shall be called and employed as the church determines the need for such

offices. A job description shall be written when the need for a staff member is determined. Those staff members of whom the church requires evidence of a personal call of God to minister shall be recommended to the church by the personnel committee and called by church action. Election shall be by ballot, an affirmative vote of three fourths of those present being necessary for a choice. At the time of resignation at least two weeks' notice shall be given to the church. The church may vote to vacate such positions upon recommendation of the personnel committee, such termination being immediate and the compensation conditions being the same as for the pastor, except that the amount shall relate to the individual's total annual compensation package.

Nonministerial staff members shall be employed as the church determines the need for their services. The church personnel committee shall have the authority to employ and to terminate services of nonministerial staff members. Such employment and termination of services shall be with the recommendation of the supervising staff member and, as appropriate, with the consultation of related committees of the church.

3. **The Deacon** - In accordance with the qualifications of the work and the practice in the New Testament (see Acts 6:1-7 and I Timothy 3:8-13), Deacons are to be servants of the church. Their task is to serve with the pastor and staff in performing the pastoral ministries tasks of (1) leading the church in the achievement of its mission, (2) proclaiming the gospel to believers and unbelievers, and (3) caring for the church's members and other persons in the community.

Deacons are ordained for life and once elected will serve on the deacon committee on a rotational bases for a term of three years and will then be off the committee for at least one year. Exceptions for special circumstances will be made by the Deacon committee and brought to the church for vote.

Nominations for the Deacon committee will be taken from the church at each July business meeting. The number of Deacons needed will be determined by the church at this time.

Those men eligible for nomination shall be:

- a. Deacons who have served as such at Hebron Baptist church and have been off the committee for at least one year. A list of those deacons eligible for nomination, deacons presently serving on the committee and their respective terms, along with deacons eligible for nomination but unable to serve will published to the church membership two weeks prior to nominations. Deacons eligible for nomination but unable to serve should contact the pastor or chairman of deacons by each second Sunday in June to have their name placed on the proper list.
- b. Deacons ordained by another church of like faith and order, having been a member of Hebron Baptist Church for one year.
- c. non-ordained men who have been a Christian for at least five years, a member of this Church for at least two full years and be twenty-one years of age or older.

The pastor and/or Deacon Chairman shall contact the nominees of category "a." as to their willingness and ability to serve.

When candidates have been nominated with the qualifications of "b." and/or "c." above, a Deacon Candidate committee will be established consisting of the Pastor, Deacon Chairman, Vice-chairman, and two non-deacon adult members of the Church, 21 years old or older,. The two non-deacon members will be nominated and elected from the floor at the same July Business Meeting. This Deacon Candidate committee will interview each nominee of categories "b." and "c." and his wife (if married) as to their qualifications and willingness to serve, their beliefs on tithing, attendance, support of church activities, and service to the Church.

After the interviews the Deacon Candidate committee will make a recommendation to the Church of all candidates qualified and willing to serve by the last Sunday in August. Those candidates recommended by this Deacon Candidate committee or, in the case of there being only candidates of category “a” above recommended by the Deacon chairman, will be placed on a ballot to be mailed to the church membership by the following Tuesday. The church will have the opportunity to question the candidates of categories “b” and “c” above on the ballot the first Sunday in September. The candidates will then be voted on by secret ballot at the morning service(s) of the second Sunday in September. The candidate(s) with the highest vote(s) will be elected to serve. The un-ordained candidates elected will be ordained on the earliest Sunday possible after the election results are published.

Each rotation term starts on October 1<sup>st</sup>.

4. The church shall elect annually a **moderator** as its presiding officer. In the absence of the moderator, the chairman of deacons shall preside; or in the absence of both, the clerk shall call the church to order and preside for the election of an acting moderator.

5. The church shall elect annually a **clerk** as its clerical officer. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a suitable record of all official actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a register of names of members, with dates of admission, dismissal, death, or erasure, together with a record of baptisms. The clerk shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church, preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give required notice of all meetings where notice is necessary, as indicated in these bylaws. The clerk shall be responsible for preparing the annual letter of the church to the association.

The church may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to a church secretary who will assist the elected clerk. All church records are church property and shall be kept in the church office or other church area as designated.

6. The church shall elect annually a **church treasurer** as its financial officer. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out, upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel, all monies or items of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. A financial report shall be rendered at each regular business meeting consisting of an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements of the preceding month. The treasurer's report and records shall be audited annually by an auditing committee or public accountant. The treasurer shall be bonded, the church paying for the bond.

The church may delegate some of the record keeping responsibilities to a church financial secretary who will assist the elected treasurer. The church financial secretary shall be bonded, the church paying for the bond.

Upon rendering the annual account at the end of each fiscal year and its acceptance and approval by the church, the records shall be delivered by the treasurer to the church clerk, who shall keep and preserve the account as a part of the permanent records of the church.

7. The church shall elect three or more **trustees** to serve as legal officers for the church. They shall hold in trust the church property. Upon a specific vote of the church authorizing each action, they shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property. When the signatures of trustees are required, they shall sign legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property, or other legal documents related to church-approved matters.

Trustees shall serve on a rotation basis, with one-third new trustees being elected every three years. After serving a term of three years' assignment, a trustee shall be eligible for reelection only after the lapse of at least one year.

## **Section 2. Church Committees**

The committees of this church shall be a Nominating Committee, a Personnel Committee, a Building and Grounds Committee, a Budget and Finance Committee, a Missions Committee, a Ministerial Staff Salary Review Committee, and such other regular and special committees as the church shall authorize. Additional regular committees may be added as deemed necessary by the church body. All church committee members shall be recommended by the church nominating committee and elected by the church unless otherwise specified within these bylaws. Committee members shall serve on a three-year rotation basis with one third to be elected each year. After serving a term of three years, a committee member shall be eligible for reelection to the same committee only after the lapse of at least one year. The church may determine committees not subject to the rotation policy. EX OFFICIO members of committees are exempt from the rotation policy and need not remain off of a committee for a lapse of one year.

1. The **Nominating Committee** coordinates the staffing of all church leadership positions filled by volunteer workers, unless otherwise specified herein. Persons considered for any such positions shall first be approved by the Nominating Committee before they are approached for recruitment. The Nominating Committee shall present to the church for election all who accept the invitation to serve.

2. The **Personnel Committee** assists the church in matters related to employed personnel administration, including those called by church action. Their work includes such areas as determining staff needs, employment, starting salaries, benefits, other compensation, policies, job descriptions, and personnel services.

3. The **Church Building and Grounds Committee** assists the church in matters related to properties administration. Their work includes such areas as maintaining all church properties for ready use, recommending policies regarding use of properties, consulting with the Personnel Committee and the church staff regarding the needs for, and the employment of, maintenance personnel, and regarding the assignment of supervisory responsibility to appropriate personnel.

4. The **Budget and Finance Committee** develops and recommends a unified church budget. It advises and recommends in the administration of the gifts of church members and others, using sound principles of financial management. It works with the church treasurer in the preparation and presentation to the church of required reports regarding the financial affairs of the church. The church treasurer shall serve as an EX OFFICIO member of the Budget and Finance Committee.

5. The **Ministerial Staff Salary Review Committee** shall be responsible for annually evaluating the ministerial staff (Pastor, Music, Education, Youth, etc.) of the church for the purpose of recommending annual salaries.

The Pastor's evaluation shall be conducted by a committee of four persons: present deacon chairman, the immediate past deacon chairman, the Personnel Committee chair, and the Budget and Finance Committee chair. Should the immediate past deacon chairman be serving as current deacon chairman, his predecessor shall serve on the Ministerial Staff Salary Review Committee. The other ministerial staff evaluations shall be conducted by a committee of five persons, the aforementioned members, with the addition of the Pastor. The committee shall elect a chair from the four lay members of the committee.

The evaluations shall consider scriptural guidelines and job descriptions. Written reports shall be filed in the church safe deposit box for a period of three years and shall then be destroyed. The files shall be used publicly only in the event of severe church disciplinary action. Honor and integrity shall be of prime importance.

Other members of the church staff shall be evaluated by the Personnel Committee. Their recommendations will be given to the members of the Budget and Finance Committee.

6. The **Missions Committee** seeks to discover possibilities for local mission projects, shares findings with church program organization, and serve the church in establishing and conducting such mission projects as may be assigned to it.

### III. CHURCH PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONS

The church shall maintain programs of Bible teaching; church member training, church leader training, new member orientation; mission education, action, support and music education, training, and performance. All organizations related to the church programs shall be under church control, all officers being elected by the church and reporting regularly to the church, and all program activities subject to church coordination and approval. The church shall provide the human resources, the physical resources, and the financial resources for the appropriate advancement of these programs.

1. The **Sunday School** shall be the basic organization for the Bible teaching program. Its tasks shall be to teach the biblical revelation, reach persons for Christ and church membership, perform the functions of the church within its constituency, provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

The Sunday School shall be organized by departments and/or classes, as appropriate for all ages, and shall be conducted under the direction of the Sunday School director elected by the church.

2. The **Church Training** organization shall serve as the training unit of the church. Its tasks shall be to train church members to perform the functions of the church; train church leaders, orient new church members, teach Christian theology, Christian ethics, Christian history, and church polity and organization, and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

Church Training shall be organized by departments for all ages and conducted under the direction of the Church Training director elected by the church.

3. **Woman On Mission** shall be the mission education, mission action, and mission support organization of the church for women, young women, girls, and preschool children. Its tasks shall be to teach missions; engage in mission action; support world missions through praying and giving; and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

Woman On Mission shall have such officers and organizations as the program requires.

4. The **Brotherhood** shall be the church's organization for mission education, mission action, and mission support for men, young men, and boys. Its tasks shall be to teach missions, engage in mission action, support world missions through praying and giving, and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

The Brotherhood shall have such officers and organizations as the program requires.

5. The **Church Music** organization, under the direction of the Minister of Music, shall be the music education, training, and performance organization of the church. Its tasks shall be to teach music; train persons to lead, sing, and play music; provide music in the church and community; and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

The Church Music program shall have such officers and organization as the program requires.

### V. CHURCH PROGRAM SERVICES

The church shall maintain media center services, recreation service, and cemetery services for the purpose of enriching and extending the ministries and programs of the church.

1. The **Media Center** service will be the resource center and historical archives for the church. Its personnel will seek to provide and promote the use of printed and audiovisual resources. They also will provide consultation to church leaders and members in the use of printed and audiovisual resources.

2. The **Church Recreation** service will seek to meet the recreational needs of members and groups. Its personnel will provide recreation activities, leadership assistance, and resources.

3. The **Church Cemetery** service will seek to meet the burial needs of church members. The guidelines for Hebron Baptist Church Cemetery are: Plots in the cemetery may be reserved for church members and their immediate families living under the same roof. Exception will be made for members of the family who are living away from home but who have not established a home of their own. Any other allowances will be made by the Cemetery Committee. Plots which have already been reserved will be honored.

## **V. CHURCH COUNCIL**

The church council shall serve the church by leading in planning, coordinating, conducting, and evaluating the ministries and programs of the church and its organizations.

The primary functions of the church council shall be to recommend to the church suggested objectives and church goals; to review and coordinate ministry and program plans recommended by church officers, organization, and committees; to recommend to the church the use of leadership, calendar time, and other resources according to program priorities; and to evaluate achievements in terms of church objectives and goals.

Regular members of the church council shall be the pastor, other church staff members, directors of church program organizations, media center director, recreation director, chairman of deacons, church officers, and chairpersons of church committees.

All matters agreed upon by the council which call for action not already approved shall be referred to the church for approval or disapproval.

## **VI. CHURCH ORDINANCES**

### **Section 1. Baptism**

This church shall receive for baptism any person who has received Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith, who professes him publicly at any worship service, and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord.

1. Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
2. The pastor, or whomever the church shall authorize, shall administer baptism. The Baptism Committee shall assist in the preparation for, and the observance of, baptism.
3. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service of the church.
4. A person who professes Christ and is not baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by the pastor and/or staff or deacons. If negative interest is ascertained on the part of the candidate, the candidate shall be deleted from those awaiting baptism.

### **Section 2. The Lord's Supper**

The church shall observe the Lord's Supper regularly, on the fifth Sunday of each month, unless otherwise scheduled by the church. The pastor and deacons shall administer the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper Committee shall be responsible for the physical preparations.

## VII. CHURCH MEETINGS

### Section 1. Worship Services

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday evening for the worship of Almighty God. Prayer, praise, preaching, instruction, and evangelism shall be among the ingredients of these services. 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 Kingdom of God and the church's objectives shall be placed on the Church calendar.

### Section 3. Regular Business Meetings

The church shall hold regular business meetings monthly on a designated night.

### Section 4. Special Business Meetings

The church may conduct called business meetings to consider matters of special nature and significance. A one-week notice must be given for the specially called business meeting unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical. The notice shall include the subject, the date, and time and place; and it must be given in such a manner that all resident members have opportunity to know of the meeting.

### Section 5. Quorum

The quorum consists of those members who attend the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called.

### Section 6. Parliamentary Rules

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church.

## VIII. CHURCH FINANCES

### Section 1. Budget

The Budget and Finance Committee, in consultation with the church council, shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by items the amount needed and sought for all local and other expenses. Offering envelopes will be provided for members' use.

It is understood that membership in this church involves financial obligation to support the church and its causes with regular, proportionate gifts.

Church action on the annual church budget shall be taken at the regular November business meeting. A copy of the proposed budget shall be mailed to all resident church members at least ten (10) days prior to the regular November business meeting.

### Section 2. Accounting Procedures

All funds received for any and all purposes shall pass through the hands of the church treasurer, or financial secretary, and be properly recorded on the books of the church. Those who have responsibility that involves actual handling of funds shall be bonded, the church paying the bond. The treasurer's report and records shall be audited annually by an auditing committee or public accountant. (See Article II, Section 1, (6), regarding the church treasurer).

A system of accounting that will adequately provide for the handling of all funds shall be the responsibility of the stewardship committee.

### Section 3. Fiscal Year

The church fiscal year shall be January 1 through December 31.

## **IX. AMENDMENTS**

Changes in the constitution and bylaws may be made at any regular business meeting of the Church provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at the immediate preceding business meeting and copies of the proposed amendment shall have been furnished to each member present at the prior meeting. Amendments to the constitution shall be by two-thirds vote of church members present. Amendments to the bylaws shall have a concurrence of a majority of the members present and voting. Any amendments passed to the Constitution and/or Bylaws during the previous fiscal year shall be made available to church members upon request.

September, 1995

Revised September, 2001

Revised July, 2010

Revised November, 2011