

**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS  
OF  
THE CAMP BRANCH BAPTIST CHURCH**

*Revised January 2007*

## **INTRODUCTION**

A church is a fellowship of people who have accepted Christ as Savior and are united by their common relation to the Holy Spirit. A church, like a community or an individual, is always changing. Fundamental doctrines remain the same, but methods of teaching these doctrines and of moving toward objectives must change if the mission of the church is to be accomplished.

A church constitution and bylaws document help a church preserve a democratic procedure. This instrument serves as the guide for members to follow in carrying out the work of the church.

Basic theology, organizational structures, and church policies are contained in a constitution. Bylaws, on the other hand, state the methods for expediting these principles and policies. Bylaws will usually be changed more often than the constitution. It should be emphasized, however, that both the constitution and bylaws should be reviewed annually by the church council and/or deacons. As the program of a church changes, so must its rules of governmental procedures be brought up to date.

The basic advantages of a constitution and bylaws are:

1. Furnishes members a written statement of their church organization, fundamental guidelines, and theological beliefs.
2. Aids in preserving democracy and harmony since predetermined guidelines have already been established by the members.
3. Provides orderly procedures for guiding the transaction of church business.
4. Serves as a basis for solving problems before problems arise.

## **CONSTITUTION**

### ***PREAMBLE***

We declare and establish this constitution for the preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and so that this body may be governed in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body in relation to other churches of the same faith.

## ***ARTICLE I. NAME***

This body shall be known as the CAMP BRANCH BAPTIST CHURCH of 18020 W. 32<sup>nd</sup> Street Road, Sedalia, Pettis County, Missouri, 65301.

## ***ARTICLE II. STATEMENT OF FAITH***

The Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God and is the basis for any statement of faith. The church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of the Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000. We band together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ, personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind. The ordinances of the church are baptism and the Lord's Supper.

## ***ARTICLE III. CHURCH MISSION***

The Camp Branch Baptist Church is a body of believers worshipping in a common fellowship and mission for Christ; providing resources, information, and awareness to the body of Christ; enabling each other to reach out and share the good news of the gospel through evangelism and personal ministry.

## ***ARTICLE IV. CHURCH COVENANT***

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our 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, discipline, and doctrines.

To contribute cheerfully and regularly to the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spreading of the gospel throughout all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to educate our children religiously; 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 and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to use our influence to combat the abuse of drugs and the spread of pornography; 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 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.

## ***ARTICLE V. CHARACTER***

### **Section 1. Polity.**

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It 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. Whenever practical, this church will cooperate with and support the association and state convention affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

### **Section 2. Doctrine.**

This church receives the Holy Scriptures as its authority in matters of faith and practice. Its understanding of Christian truth as contained therein is in essential accord with the belief of the Southern Baptist Convention.

### **Section 3. Dissolution Clause.**

Should the Camp Branch Baptist Church cease cooperating with and supporting the aforesaid ministry within the aforesaid Articles I-V, the entire property, now presented, shall immediately revert to the Harmony Baptist Association, with any and all buildings that have been added thereto.

## **BYLAWS**

## ***ARTICLE 1. 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 right of exclusive 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 business meeting in any of the following ways:

- (1) By public profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior and following baptism into the full fellowship of the church.
- (2) By promise of a letter from another Baptist church of like faith and order.
- (3) By statement of prior salvation experience and baptism in a Baptist church when no letter is obtainable.
- (4) By testimony of believer's baptism: having been immersed as a believer by a Christian evangelical church; and, fully subscribing to the doctrine and principles of the Baptist Faith and Message of 1963.

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

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

### **Section 4. 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 restoration 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 deacons will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accord with Matthew 18.

If it becomes necessary for the church 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.

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

Membership shall be terminated in any of the following ways:

- (1) Death.
- (2) Transfer of membership to another Baptist church of like faith and order.
- (3) Exclusion by action of this church.
- (4) Erasure by request in person at any regular business meeting or erasure of notification by letter to church clerk.
- (5) Dismissal by becoming affiliated with a church of another faith or denomination.

## ***ARTICLE II. CHURCH OFFICERS***

All church officers must be members of the church. The officers of this church shall be as follows:

### **Section 1. Pastor.**

The pastor is responsible for leading the church in functioning as a New Testament church. The pastor will lead the congregation, the organizations, and the church staff in performing their tasks. A major concern of the pastor is to perform pastoral responsibilities. The pastor is the leader of worship, proclamation, education, and pastoral ministry.

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

A pulpit committee shall be appointed by the church to seek out a suitable pastor, and their recommendations will constitute a nomination, though any member has the privilege of making other nominations according to the policy established by the church. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one man at a time. Election shall be by ballot, with 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 the church. The pastor shall give at least two weeks notice at the time of resignation before terminating his responsibilities as pastor.

### **Section 2. Church Staff.**

This church shall call or employ such staff members as the church shall need. A job description shall be written when the need for staff members is determined. Vocational staff members other than the pastor shall be recommended to the church by the appropriate committee and employed by church approval.

The secretaries and custodians shall likewise be recommended to the church by the appropriate committee and employed by church approval.

### **Section 3. Deacons.**

The church shall elect deacons by ballot at regular business meetings of the church. Candidates shall be nominated by the deacon council and church council meeting in joint session. The deacon council shall consist of one deacon, if possible, for every 12 to 15 church families. Six months membership is required for deacon candidacy.

In accordance with the meaning of the work and the practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. The task of the deacon is to assist the pastor in performing pastoral responsibilities.

The deacons shall elect their officers and shall be organized to assist the pastor and for the consideration of problems related to their work. They shall serve the church in the specific areas of baptism and the Lord's Supper. The deacons shall elect annually in their July meeting a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Clerk.

The deacons shall organize and serve on the following committees:

#### **A. Baptism Committee:**

This committee shall consist of deacons and wives. The Baptism Committee is elected to assist the pastor in preparing for the ordinance of baptism. The committee is responsible for preparing the candidates and the baptistery for the ordinance.

#### **B. Lord's Supper Committee:**

The Lord's Supper Committee prepares the elements and the equipment for the observance of the Lord's Supper. The committee does the preparatory and

maintenance work needed to observe the memorial service. The committee will prepare the elements on a schedule approved by the church.

**C. Benevolence Committee:**

The Benevolence Committee shall be responsible for alleviating the needs of persons either within or without the church membership. In any case, funds or other property available to it for such purposes may be used or disbursed by the Benevolence Committee within its sole discretion to the extent designated or allocated in the unified church budget.

**Section 4. Moderator.**

The moderator shall be the pastor. In the absence of the pastor, the chairman of deacons shall preside; or in the absence of both, the church clerk shall call the church to order and a moderator pro-tem shall be elected.

**Section 5. Clerk.**

The church-elected clerk of the church shall keep in a suitable book a record of all the actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. The clerk is responsible for keeping a register of names of members, with dates of admission, dismissal, or death, 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 legal notice of all meetings where such notice is necessary as indicated by these laws. All church records are church property and should be filed in the church office when one is maintained.

**Section 6. Treasurer.**

The church shall elect annually a church treasurer. 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 money or things of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the church at each business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements for the preceding month. The treasurer's report shall be reviewed annually by the Budget/Finance/Stewardship Committee or certified public accountant.

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 part of the permanent records of the church.



**Section 7. Financial Secretary.**

The financial secretary shall receive the empty collection envelopes after the money has been removed and counted by the proper persons selected by the church and from these give donors individual credit. The envelopes shall be kept for reference for a period of two years. Records will be kept for the monthly balance, which will indicate receipts from envelopes, offering plates, and miscellaneous or special offerings. The secretary will also be responsible for preparing and mailing records of contributions to all contributing members.

**Section 8. Church Historian and Reporter.**

The historian is to preserve and use the historical records of the church. The historian is especially concerned with gathering and preserving available church records, recording full and accurate records, and using the records to help members understand and appreciate their heritage and mission. The historian will also serve as church reporter.

**Section 9. Church Council.**

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

The council, unless otherwise determined by vote of the church, shall have as regular members the pastor, chairman of deacons, church clerk, treasurer, music director, Sunday School director, Discipleship Training director, Women on Mission director, Brotherhood director, and committee chairmen.

All matters agreed upon by the council, calling for action not already provided for, shall be referred to the church for approval or disapproval.

***ARTICLE III. CHURCH COMMITTEES***

**Section 1. General.**

All church committee members must be members of the church. All church committee members shall be selected by the nominating committee and elected by the church. The committee members shall serve on a three-year rotation system with one-third to be elected each year. All church committees are accountable to the congregation for proper functioning and efficient operation and shall give a report of activities planned and services rendered at regular business meetings. The following committees shall be elected:

## **Section 2. Standing Committees.**

### **A. Budget/Finance/Stewardship Committee:**

The Budget/Finance/Stewardship Committee develops and recommends an overall stewardship development plan, a unified church budget, and budget subscription plans. 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 treasurer in the preparation and presentation to the church of required reports regarding the financial affairs of the church.

### **B. Fellowship Committee:**

The Fellowship Committee shall plan and present ways to promote fellowship among the church members. They are responsible for preparing and recommending to the church policies for the kitchen and for communicating these policies to the church members.

### **C. Flower Committee:**

The Flower Committee is responsible for securing, arranging and disposing of floral arrangements for church services, and for providing flowers for sick and bereaved members.

### **D. Missions and Evangelism Committee:**

The Missions and Evangelism Committee seeks to discover possibilities for local missions projects, shares findings with church program organizations, and serves the church in establishing and conducting such missions projects as may be assigned to it.

### **E. Nominating Committee:**

The Nominating Committee of three members coordinates the staffing of all church leadership positions that are filled by volunteers. The Nominating Committee recommends persons for all volunteer positions to be elected by the church.

### **F. Nursery Committee:**

The Nursery Committee shall be responsible for the arrangement and care of rooms, safety of babies, and care of nursery equipment, materials and supplies; shall promote good will between parents and nursery personnel; and shall be

responsible for drafting any desired policies, rules and regulations for the effective and efficient operation of the nursery.

#### **G. Personnel Committee**

The Personnel Committee shall be responsible to establish and maintain appropriate personnel policies and procedures to ensure that position descriptions are prepared for all paid staff of the church; Review annually the efficiency and effectiveness of paid personnel, and make salary recommendations to the Budget/Finance/Stewardship committee; Recruit and hire necessary support personnel to effectively and efficiently administer the ministries of the church.

#### **H. Recreation Committee**

The Recreation Committee shall be responsible for promoting recreational activities among church members. They shall plan activities; organize and supervise all organized sports teams that represent Camp Branch Baptist Church; and recommend policies to the church concerning participation in organized activities.

#### **I. Trustees:**

Three trustees will hold in trust the property of the church. Its work includes such areas as maintaining all church properties for ready use and recommending policies regarding use of properties. No expenditure of more than one thousand dollars shall be made without church approval. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without a specific vote of the church authorizing each action. It shall be the function of the trustees to affix their signatures to legal documents involving the sale, mortgaging, or purchase or rental of property or other legal documents where the signatures of trustees are required.

#### **Section 3. Special Committees.**

The pastor shall appoint such special committees and the members thereof with church approval. Special committees shall not supersede the duties of any standing committee as outlined in Section 2.

#### **Section 4. Child and youth protection polices:**

Child and youth protection polices/procedures will be reviewed annually by a group comprised of members of the Children's Ministry, Youth Ministry, Nursery Committee and the Sunday School Director. Changes in the polices/procedures will be subject to church approval.

## ***ARTICLE IV. CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS***

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

The church shall maintain programs of Bible teaching; church member training; church leader training; new member orientation; mission education, action, and 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, 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.

### **Section 2. Sunday School.**

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, and 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.

### **Section 3. Discipleship Training.**

The Discipleship 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 denomination.

### **Section 4. Women on Mission.**

Women 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.

Women on Mission shall have such officers and organizations, as the program requires.

### **Section 5. Brotherhood.**

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 through praying and giving, and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination. The Brotherhood shall have such officers and organization, as the program requires.

**Section 6. Church Music Organization.**

The Church Music Organization, under the direction of the church-elected music director, 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.

**Section 7. Youth Ministry.**

The Youth Ministry shall plan all programs and ministries for the youth grades 7 through 12 of the church, supervise and provide chaperones for youth functions, promote and publicize the youth activities of the church.

**Section 8. Children's Ministry.**

The Children's Ministry shall plan all programs and ministries for the children from preschool to 6<sup>th</sup> grade of the church; supervise and provide chaperones for children's functions; promote and publicize children's activities of the church.

***ARTICLE V. CHURCH MEETINGS***

**Section 1. Worship Services.**

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning, Sunday evening and Wednesday evening for preaching, instruction, evangelism, prayer and for the worship of Almighty God. These meetings will be open for the entire membership of the church and for all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor.

**Section 2. Special Services.**

Revival services and any other church meetings, which will be essential in the promotion of the objectives of the church, shall be placed on the church calendar.

### **Section 3. Regular Business Meetings.**

Regular business meetings shall be held on the second Wednesday night in the months of January, March, May, July, August, September, and November. Should there be any unusual business or matter of unusual interest to be brought before such regular business meeting, notice shall be given to the membership at the previous business meeting. Voting will be permitted only by members present. An agenda shall be presented to and voted upon by the church previous to each business meeting as the first item of business.

### **Section 4. Special Business Meetings.**

A specially called business meeting may be called by the Pastor, the Deacons, or any standing committee to consider special matters of a significant nature. A one-week written notice of the subject, date, time and location must be given for the specially called business meeting. An announcement written in the weekly bulletin qualifies as a written notice.

### **Section 5. Quorum.**

A quorum consists of 10 members of the church 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 adopted as the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church, the deacons, and the committees.

## ***ARTICLE VI. CHURCH FINANCES***

### **Section 1. Budget.**

The Budget/Finance/Stewardship Committee 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. Regular, spirit lead giving shall be encouraged.

### **Section 2. Accounting.**

All funds, for any and all purposes, shall pass through the hands of the church treasurer and be properly recorded in the financial records of the church.

### **Section 3. Tithes and Offerings.**

All gifts, moneys, designated gifts, donations of property, and decorations donated to the church will become church property and will be so used by church approval. No plaques or memorial markings will be permitted.

**Section 4. Fiscal Year.**

The fiscal year of the church shall run concurrently with the calendar year, which begins on January 1 and ends on December 31.

***ARTICLE VII. AMENDMENTS***

Changes in this constitution and bylaws may be made at any regular business meeting of the church, provided the basic idea of such amendments shall have been presented in writing at a previous meeting, and copies of the proposed amendment be furnished to each member present. Amendments to the constitution and bylaws shall be by two-thirds vote by ballot of all members of the church present entitled to vote.

***DIRECTIVES ON USE OF FACILITIES***

The policy of our church shall be to use the total church facilities to the best advantage of the church in carrying out the purpose and the spirit of the church. As long as policies are kept we shall endeavor to bring as many people as possible inside the church buildings in order to in some way influence them toward Christ.

The use of decorations, the changing of furniture, attachment of materials to walls, and items of a similar nature shall be done only with the advice and consent of the pastor and/or trustees. This applies particularly to weddings.

The musical instruments in the sanctuary are under the care and supervision of the director of music and may not be used without their consent.

The public address system of the sanctuary will be regulated by the pastor, director of music, and/or trustees.

***RULES***

**Kitchen:**

All groups and organizations will maintain good housekeeping principles and leave the kitchen area in proper order.

Arrangement for use of kitchen must be arranged with the pastor or trustees. Parties using the facilities will be responsible for equipment damage or breakage or loss.

**Classrooms:**

To remove tables and chairs from premises must be cleared by the pastor or trustees.

**Office:**

No office equipment is to leave the building unless for church related needs.

**Fellowship Hall:**

Parties using equipment will be responsible. No smoking, gambling, drinking, dancing, drug abuse or profanity allowed on church property.

**Weddings:**

Prior arrangements for the building will be made with the pastor or trustees and cleaned by the party using it.

**Funerals:**

Use of facilities of the church for funerals must have prior approval of the pastor and/ or trustees.

**Cemetery:**

Maintenance and care of the cemetery is under the jurisdiction of the trustees and use of the cemetery is limited to church members and their families.