

**CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS
of
THE NORTHSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH, INC.
OF ST. PETERSBURG**

Updated on June 28, 2009

PREAMBLE

Placing our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for our salvation, believing in the teachings and practices of the Holy Scriptures and accepting these Scriptures as our sole and perfect rule of faith and practice, we therefore band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ and adopt for our government and plan of worship and service the following Constitution and Bylaws, and we rescind all previous action contrary thereto.

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CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I

NAME

The fellowship shall be known as **The Northside Baptist Church, Inc. of St. Petersburg**. This church shall be an independent church, not affiliated with any denomination.

ARTICLE II

PURPOSE

Northside Baptist Church exists to make disciples of Jesus Christ both here and abroad. We will accomplish this through the church's five-fold purpose: to worship God, to present Christ, to care for people, to equip believers, and to serve God.

ARTICLE III

CHURCH COVENANT

Having received Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior by faith and through no work of our own but through the atoning work accomplished through His death, burial, and resurrection, and having been baptized as a believer to show our obedience to Jesus Christ's command and to show our identification with Jesus Christ and His Body, we, being led by the Holy Spirit, unite together as the Northside Baptist Church being committed to God and to each other.

We are committed to worship God by being faithful in regular personal worship and regular corporate worship, by being faithful in joyful and gracious giving to God's work at and through Northside, and by being faithful in living a godly life. – Hebrews 10:25; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Philippians 1:27

We are committed to present Christ by being faithful in regular witnessing by lifestyle and by verbal witness, by being faithful in regularly inviting the unchurched to attend Northside and in warmly welcoming those who visit, and by being faithful in regularly praying for the lost and those working to reach them. – Matthew 28:19-20; Luke 14:23; Romans 15:7; 1 Thessalonians 1:1-2

We are committed to care for people by being faithful in regular involvement in a small group, by being faithful in our commitment of loyalty to the members of the church by acting in love toward other members and refusing to gossip, and by being faithful in submitting to the leadership of the church and the discipline of the church should the need arise. – Romans 14:19; 1 Peter 1:22; Ephesians 4:29; Hebrews 13:17

We are committed to equip believers by being faithful in personal Bible study and prayer, and by being faithful in regular times of Biblical instruction with other believers. – Acts 17:11; Colossians 4:2; Acts 2:42

We are committed to serve God by being faithful in discovering our gifts and talents, by being faithful in developing a servant’s heart, and by being faithful in regular involvement in ministry at Northside. – 1 Peter 4:10; Philippians 2:3-4, 7; Ephesians 4:11-12

ARTICLE IV

DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

Our doctrinal statement includes statements regarding Christian Faith and Salvation, and statements regarding Practice and Understanding of Scripture. We hold these statements according to the old Christian standard – “In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things charity.”

For all members of the church, we require acceptance, in belief and presentation, of these doctrines in both areas.

For non-member ministry staff, we require acceptance of the statements regarding Christian Faith and Salvation. For the statements regarding Practice and Understanding of Scripture, we require respect, which is equal but preferred presentation and support.

CHRISTIAN FAITH and SALVATION “In essentials unity...in all things charity.”

These are the statements of doctrine requiring unity as they distinguish Christian from non-Christian and as they define Christian faith and salvation.

- THE TRINITY

We believe that there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; that these are equal in every divine perfection, and they execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence, and redemption.

Matthew 28:18-19; 2 Corinthians 13:14

- GOD THE FATHER

We believe in God, the Father, an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love. We believe that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.

John 1:12, 18; Ephesians 1:3-6

- **JESUS CHRIST**
We believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, and teaching. We believe in His substitutionary death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people, and personal visible return to earth.
Luke 1:35; John 1:1, 14, 18; Romans 3:24-26; 1 Corinthians 15:50-55
- **THE HOLY SPIRIT**
We believe in the Holy Spirit who came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify, and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe that the Holy Spirit permanently indwells every believer in Christ, and that He is an abiding helper, teacher, and guide.
Matthew 28:19; Titus 3:5; 1 Corinthians 6:19; John 16:7-11
- **THE WORD OF GOD**
We believe the Bible is the Word of God, verbally and fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.
2 Timothy 3:16-17; 1 Peter 1:21
- **MAN**
We believe that man was created in the image of God, but fell from his original state through his disobedience to God in the Garden; and that all succeeding members of the human race are sinners by nature and by choice. We believe that man is separated from God by his sin and cannot by himself be rejoined to God.
Genesis 1:27; 2:17; 3:19; and Ephesians 2:1-3
- **SALVATION**
We believe that salvation is the gift of God and is received by personal faith in Jesus Christ whose blood was shed for the forgiveness of sins. We believe that our redemption has been accomplished by means of the grace of God and is not the result of any human works.
Ephesians 2:8-9; John 1:12; and Ephesians 2:5-6

PRACTICE and UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE
“...in non-essentials liberty, in all things charity.”

These are the statements of doctrine allowing liberty as they distinguish our church from other churches and as they define our practice and understanding of Scripture.

- **ASSURANCE OF SALVATION**
We believe that all the redeemed once saved are kept by God’s power and are thus secure in Christ forever.
John 5:24; John 10:27-30; and Romans 8:1, 29-30
We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God’s Word, which however clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion for sinful living and carnality.
1 John 5:9-13; Titus 2:11-15

- CHRISTIAN CONDUCT

We believe that the Christian's goal in conduct should be to glorify God among men and that his conduct should be blameless before the world; that he should be a faithful steward of his possessions and should strive to live a Christlike life guided by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Philippians 2:14-15

- THE CHURCH

We believe in the universal church, a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members. We believe that God has laid upon the members of the church the primary task of giving the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world. We believe in the local church, consisting of a body of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized on a credible profession of faith, and associated for worship, work, and fellowship.

Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:42-47; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

- THE ORDINANCES

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that Christian Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water into the Name of the Triune God. We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for commemoration of His death, the elements being symbolic. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 28:19, Acts 10:47-48; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

- CREATION

We believe that all things in heaven and earth were created by God out of nothing and exist by His power.

Genesis 1:1; Colossians 1:16-17

- LAST THINGS

We believe that the next great event in the fulfillment of prophecy is the personal return of Jesus Christ to remove from the earth His church and to reward each believer according to his works.

2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

After the removal of the church, the righteous judgments of God will be poured out on the unbelieving world climaxed by the glorious return of Jesus Christ to the earth with His saints to establish His millennial kingdom.

Revelation 19:11-16; 20:1-6

- ETERNAL STATE

We believe that at death the souls of believers pass immediately into the presence of Jesus Christ. When Christ returns for the church they will be reunited with their glorified bodies and associated with Him forever in glory. At death the souls of unbelievers pass immediately into torment. At the close of the millennium they will be reunited with their bodies, judged before the Great White Throne, then cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated but to be separated from God forever in conscious punishment.

2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Revelation 20:11-15

ARTICLE V

MEMBERSHIP

Section A.

Admission to membership shall require a verbal or written profession of faith in Christ as personal Savior and a declaration of having experienced believer's baptism by immersion in water. All applicants shall be required to give written assent to the Doctrinal Statement, The Covenant, Constitution and Bylaws of the church before their acceptance into membership.

Section B.

Admission to membership shall also require satisfactory completion of the new member's classes.

Exceptions to the requirements of this section may be granted by the Board of Elders in the case of extenuating circumstances.

Section C.

After successful completion of the requirements of Sections A. and B. and recommendation by the Board of Elders, candidates will be received into membership at a regular service of the church.

Section D.

Associate members are those who are temporary or part-time residents of the area, but do not wish to relinquish their membership in another church.

1. Each applicant should give evidence of conversion, baptism and be required to give written assent to the Constitution and Bylaws of Northside Baptist Church.
2. These members will enjoy all the privileges of regular members except that of voting and holding the office of elder or ministry leader in the church.

Section E.

Membership may be terminated in any of the following ways:

1. Upon death of a member.
2. Upon a member's joining another church.
3. Upon disciplinary withdrawal of fellowship by the Elder Board.
4. Upon written request by the member that he or she be removed from membership of the church unless under discipline by the Elder Board.
5. Upon an absence for a prolonged period of time and whose address cannot be located.

Section F.

Any member who has been absent from the church for a period of at least one year without showing any interest therein by communication with the church or contributing to its support, will be added to a care roll at one of the semi-annual meetings of the church by the recommendation of the Elder Board. The congregation will be encouraged to reach out to those on the care roll as part of their responsibility as a member of the church.

Any member who has been on the care roll for a period of at least one year without showing any interest therein by communication with the church or contributing to its support, will be added to an inactive roll by the recommendation of the Elder Board. Persons on the inactive roll shall not be counted as members and shall have no rights of membership but may be restored to active status by action of the Board of Elders.

Any member who has been on the inactive roll for a period of at least one year without showing any interest therein by communication with the church or contributing to its support, will be removed from membership.

Section G.

Anyone preaching or teaching regularly in any ministry of the church is required to be a member or associate of the church in good standing. An exception is made for teachers of Northside Christian School. They do not need to be a member or associate of the church but they must be a member or associate of a local church.

ARTICLE VI

GOVERNMENT

Section A.

Under the authority of Jesus Christ and the Word of God, the government of the church is vested in the body of believers who compose it and is not subject to the control of any other ecclesiastical body. This authority is normally exercised through the election of officers to govern the church.

Section B.

All powers not specifically provided for in the membership of the church shall be delegated to the Board of Elders.

Section C.

All officers must be members of the church and shall be required to subscribe to the Doctrinal Statement contained in the Constitution on an annual basis. These signatures shall be procured by the Church Clerk and kept in the records of the church.

ARTICLE VII

BUSINESS MEETINGS

The business meeting of the church shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order whenever these rules are consistent with this Constitution and Bylaws.

Section A.

Regular business meetings of the membership shall be held semi-annually in the months of June and January. The Chairman of the Elder Board shall serve as moderator at all business meetings. When the Chairman is not available, the Vice

Chairman of the Elder Board will serve as moderator. The members present at any constitutionally called meeting shall constitute a quorum. All church members of legal age (18) are eligible to vote.

Section B.

The process for church elections shall be carried out by the following principles: Substantial prayer, both individually and corporately, shall be an integral part of the election process; nominations shall proceed with the support of the Elders; all candidates shall be treated with the grace, kindness and honesty appropriate to evaluating fellow members; and the process shall express that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration that is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Section C.

The election of officers – elders, clerk and treasurer – shall be held at the June business meeting. Any church member, qualified to vote, may submit in writing the name of any eligible person for these elective offices provided the nominee has previously agreed to serve. The recommendations of the elders shall be posted in the church foyer at least three Sundays prior to an election. Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified for an office should express such concern to the candidate and then to the elders. The nominating committee shall present the name of at least one person for each elective office to be filled.

Section D.

Special business meetings may be called by the Chairman of the Elder Board or the Elder Board provided that two weeks' notice is given either from the pulpit or in writing. Notification period will include two Sundays.

Section E.

Vacancies occurring during the year may be filled at any business meeting.

ARTICLE VIII

CHURCH OFFICERS

The Biblical offices in the church are elders and ministry leaders. Church officers include the Board of Elders, Treasurer, and Church Clerk. All officers of the church are to be approved by vote of the membership. The purpose of the officers of the church is to lovingly govern, care for, and equip the membership to do the work of the ministry.

Elders are responsible for governing the church, teaching the Word and tending the flock of God in this church. The elders shall be equal in authority but may be specialized in function.

Ministry Leaders shall assist the Board of Elders by performing services of advice, administration and implementation.

ELDERS – GENERAL

Section A. COMPOSITION

The Board of Elders shall be composed of men, both vocational elders and lay elders. The number of lay elders shall be no less than the number of vocational elders plus one. The Board of Elders shall be composed of a number of elders at any time determined by the needs of the ministry and by the call and qualifications of men in the church. This determination shall be made by the Board of Elders.

Section B. QUALIFICATIONS

A lay elder must be an active member of the church for at least one year. All elders must possess the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. He shall be:

1. Above reproach; blameless (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6-7)
2. Husband of one wife (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6)
3. Temperate (1 Timothy 3:2)
4. Self-controlled (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)
5. Respectable (1 Timothy 3:2)
6. Hospitable (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)
7. Able to teach; encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9)
8. Not given to drunkenness (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
9. Not violent (1 Timothy 3:3, Titus 1:7)
10. Gentle (1 Timothy 3:3)
11. Not quarrelsome; not quick-tempered (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
12. Not a lover of money; not pursuing dishonest gain (1 Timothy 3:3, Titus 1:7)
13. Manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect; whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild or disobedient (1 Timothy 3:4; Titus 1:6)
14. Not a recent convert (1 Timothy 3:6)
15. Good reputation with outsiders (1 Timothy 3:7)
16. Not over-bearing (Titus 1:7)
17. Loving what is good (Titus 1:8)
18. Upright (Titus 1:8)
19. Holy (Titus 1:8)
20. Disciplined (Titus 1:8)

In addition to these qualifications, he should meet these other Biblical qualifications:

1. Shall have compassion for the lost and seek by life and speech to witness so that they may be won to Jesus Christ.
2. Shall do all in his power to create and preserve unity in the church.
3. Shall subscribe in writing to the Doctrinal Statement of the church at the beginning of each calendar year.
4. Shall be able to keep and have the reputation for keeping confidential those things which should not be discussed with others.
5. Shall be supportive of the church by:
 - a) practicing proportionate giving by providing regular, sacrificial financial support to the church ministries,
 - b) being actively involved in church ministries.

6. Shall abstain from every sinful desire and practice that would adversely affect his testimony or be a stumbling block to another believer, and/or not contribute to his own spiritual growth and that of the church. 1 Peter 2:11

Section C. RESPONSIBILITIES

In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1–6 and I Peter 5:1–4, the Elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God’s flock.

The elders shall take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members, examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions, oversee the work of the ministry leaders and appointed church agents and committees, conduct worship services, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, equip the membership for the work of the ministry, encourage sound doctrine and practice, admonish and correct error, oversee the process of church discipline, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church, and mobilize the church for world missions. The ministry of the pulpit shall be overseen by the Board of Elders.

The elders shall recommend to the church such policies, practices, and procedures as they deem advisable in seeking to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20); implement and give direction to all such recommendations as approved by the church; and administer the business and secular affairs of the church as authorized by the church to the extent provided for in this Constitution and Bylaws having authority to do and perform all things reasonably necessary in connection therewith.

The elders shall prepare and present annual budgets to the church for approval prior to implementation.

The elders shall present to the congregation for approval all expenditures or commitments in excess of ten percent of the annual budget.

The elders may purchase, sell, convey, mortgage, and otherwise dispose of any real or personal property provided that transactions in excess of \$100,000 shall be approved by a two-thirds vote of the quorum present and voting at a constitutionally called church meeting. Legal documents related to transactions of this type shall be signed by the Chairman and Secretary of the Board of Elders.

Section D. ORGANIZATION

The Board of Elders shall organize itself however it determines to be best to achieve the mission of the Church. The elders shall be equal in authority but may be specialized in function. The elders shall meet regularly. Unless the Board provides otherwise, meetings of the Board may be held immediately upon notice. A quorum for meetings of the elders is defined as at least one-half of the Board of Elders with the number of the lay elders exceeding the vocational elders plus one, except for matters on which only lay elders are entitled to vote in which case a majority of the lay elders shall constitute a quorum. The Board shall annually select its Chairman and Vice-Chairman from among its lay elders.

ELDERS – VOCATIONAL

Section A. DEFINITION

Pastors are the vocational elders of the church, who in response to God's call, have devoted their vocational lives to the ministry of the Word and prayer in the service of the church of Christ. They are supported financially by the church in return for their vocational labors.

Section B. RESPONSIBILITIES

Pastors shall be members of the Board of Elders. In addition to the duties of their office described in Section C above, pastors shall perform the duties determined by the Board of Elders and approved by the congregation.

The Pastors shall be the leaders and coordinators of all spiritual activities of the church. The thrust of their prayers, visitation, teaching, and preaching of the Word of God shall be to edify the saints and evangelize the lost. They shall normally minister the Word of God at regular church services and administer the Ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. They shall maintain, with the help of the Elder Board, church discipline among the membership.

The Senior Pastor shall be a member of the Executive Committee. He shall be the executive administrator, directing and coordinating the work of the church staff.

Section C. CALL AND TENURE

When it is necessary to call a Senior Pastor, a representative Pastoral Search Committee, consisting of four Elder Board members and three church members at large shall be named by the Elder Board and ratified by the church. When it is necessary to call any of the other pastors, the Elder Board shall act as the Search Committee.

It shall be the duty of the Search Committees to take necessary steps to secure a pastor. In seeking a suitable man, the committee shall consider suggestions from the members of the church. The committee shall investigate the merits of every man under consideration in regard to personal character, education, ministerial record, and preaching ability in determining his fitness for said pastorate. When a suitable man has been found, the committee shall recommend him to the church for its consideration.

The call of a pastor shall come before the church at a special business meeting, notice of such meeting and its purpose having been read from the pulpit on two successive Sundays. An affirmative vote of three-fourths of the members present and voting shall be necessary to extend a call to anyone under consideration. Only one candidate shall be presented to the church at a time. The vote shall be by written ballot.

Section D. TERMINATION

A Pastor's term of office may be ended upon 30 days' notification in writing on the part of the Pastor or the church. The Pastor shall first give his resignation to the Elder Board before it is presented to the church.

All actions to dismiss a Pastor shall be referred to the Elder Board for its consideration before action is taken by the church. The Elder Board shall be required to present to the church any written request for dismissal of a Pastor when signed by one-tenth of the voting membership of the church.

Such actions shall be taken at a regular or special business meeting and shall be by written ballot with three-fourths majority vote of members present necessary to carry the motion for dismissal.

ELDERS – LAY

Section A. DEFINITION

Members of the congregation who meet the qualifications of elders, are willing to carry out the responsibilities of elders and are recognized by the congregation as elders are the lay elders of the church. They are not supported financially by the church.

Section B. RESPONSIBILITIES

In addition to the duties of their office described under the Elders – General section above, lay elders shall perform the duties determined by the Board of Elders and approved by the congregation.

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the Board of Elders will be selected from the lay elders and will have the responsibilities to moderate Elder and Congregational meetings.

Section C. CALL AND TENURE

The Board of Elders shall recognize, interview and investigate candidates for lay elder. The Board shall provide for individual members of the Church either to nominate candidates or to present themselves to the Board as candidates for office and for the Board's further investigation. In no instances shall any individual be considered a nominee for the office without the nominee's consent.

Lay elders shall be called by the Church for a normal term of five years. They shall stand for reaffirmation not later than the fifth annual meeting of the church following their call or previous reaffirmation. Calling or reaffirmation of a lay elder shall be by three-fourths vote of those members present and voting at the meeting. They shall serve no more than two consecutive terms. Following two consecutive terms they will not serve actively in office for a period of one year. Following this period they are again eligible for nomination as an elder.

Section D. TERMINATION

A lay elder may resign his office at any time he feels that God is leading him to do so or if he finds he is no longer able to meet the qualifications or discharge the duties of the office.

Where a grievance exists against a lay elder either due to adherence of beliefs contrary to the Doctrinal Statement of the Church or due to alleged conduct on his part unfitting an elder, such grievance may be brought before the Board of Elders by any two members in good standing. If the Board of Elders, after thorough investigation and

consideration, believes the grievance to be true and substantial, then the elder will be given the option to repent and resign or he will be removed from office upon the recommendation of the Board of Elders, by a two-thirds vote, and when supported by closed ballot of a majority of members of the Church present and voting at a properly called meeting of the church. The elder in question is not entitled to vote on the recommendation.

If a lay elder stands for reaffirmation and fails to be reaffirmed, they shall be removed from office.

ELDERS – SPECIAL

Section A. CLERK

The Clerk of the Church shall be the Secretary of the Elder Board. He shall delegate responsibilities to insure that a record of all the transactions of the church is kept. The Clerk shall see that official communications and written reports are preserved on file. He shall also obtain written affirmation to the Doctrinal Statement annually from all active elders and ministry leaders.

Section B. TREASURER

The Church Treasurer shall be the Chairman of the Finance Committee. A Ministry Leader, or other designated persons shall be responsible for the counting and depositing of all monies collected into the correct bank accounts designated by the Board of Elders. The Treasurer or other designated persons approved by the Board of Elders shall be responsible for signing all checks.

MINISTRY LEADERS

Section A. DEFINITION

The New Testament uses the Greek word diakonos – which is translated into English as one who serves, waits on table, cares for others, a minister, or a servant – to speak of leaders in ministry in the Church. While all believers are to minister, the office of Ministry Leader is a recognition of those called by God, qualified according to His Word, willing to carry out the responsibilities of Ministry Leaders, and appointed by the Board of Elders to leadership in ministry.

Section B. COMPOSITION

The Ministry Leaders shall be both men and women. They shall include both vocational ministers and lay members. The number of Ministry Leaders shall not be fixed. The Board of Elders shall set apart, according to its need, those who evidence the scriptural qualifications for this office.

Section C. CALL AND TENURE

The call to the office of Ministry Leaders is the work of God, recognized by the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders shall recognize, interview, investigate and appoint candidates for the office of Ministry Leader.

No term of office shall be fixed for Ministry Leaders. If a Ministry Leader fails to meet the necessary scriptural qualifications for his or her office, or fails to live to the church

covenant, or leaves the membership of the church, or asks to step down from the office, then he or she will be removed from office. The Board of Elders will conduct an annual affirmation of these requirements for each Ministry Leader.

Section D. ORGANIZATION

The Elders will appoint one of the Lay Elders to act as the chair and one of the Vocational Elders to act as the vice-chair of the Ministry Leader Board in order to provide leadership from and facilitate communication with the Board of Elders. Meetings of the Ministry Leaders Board shall be held at least quarterly and may meet as often as deemed necessary to carry out the ministries of the church.

Section E. QUALIFICATIONS

The Ministry Leaders shall consist of men and women who have been active members of the church for at least one year. They should meet the following general, Biblical qualifications:

1. Shall have compassion for the lost and seek by life and speech to witness so that they may be won to Jesus Christ.
2. Shall do all in his or her power to create and preserve unity in the church.
3. Shall subscribe in writing to the Doctrinal Statement of the church at the beginning of each calendar year.
4. Shall be able to keep and have the reputation for keeping confidential those things which should not be discussed with others.
5. Shall be supportive of the church by:
 - a) practicing proportionate giving by providing regular, sacrificial financial support to the church ministries,
 - b) being actively involved in church ministries.
6. Shall abstain from every sinful desire and practice that would adversely affect his or her testimony or be a stumbling block to another believer, and/or not contribute to his or her own spiritual growth and that of the church. 1 Peter 2:1

Men serving as Ministry Leaders shall possess the qualifications given in 1 Timothy 3:8-10, 12-13:

1. Worthy of respect – honorable, of good character (1 Timothy 3:8)
2. Sincere – not twofaced (1 Timothy 3:8)
3. Not indulging in much wine (1 Timothy 3:8)
4. Not pursuing dishonest gain (1 Timothy 3:8)
5. Keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience (1 Timothy 3:9)
6. Nothing against them – beyond reproach, without fault (1 Timothy 3:10)
7. Husband of but one wife (1 Timothy 3:12)
8. Manage his children and his household well (1 Timothy 3:12)

In addition to these, he should demonstrate the character described in Acts 6:1-7 and Titus 2:2, 6.

Women serving as Ministry Leaders shall possess the qualifications given in 1 Timothy 3:11:

1. Worthy of respect – honorable, of good character(1 Timothy 3:11)
2. Not malicious talkers (1 Timothy 3:11)

3. Temperate – sober, self-controlled (1 Timothy 3:11)
4. Trustworthy in everything (1 Timothy 3:11)

In addition to these, she should demonstrate the character described in Titus 2:3-5 and 1 Timothy 5:9-10.

Section F. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Ministry Leaders assist the Board of Elders in the care and nurturing of the church. Their unique purpose is to carry out the kind of work described in the Book of Acts, chapter 6: to wait on those in need in order that the Elders may have adequate time and opportunity to “devote themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word of God.” The Ministry Leaders must fulfill the responsibilities of their office in cooperation with, and in subjection to, the Elders. By nature, some of their responsibilities will be ongoing while others will be on an “as needed” basis. Their responsibilities shall include:

1. Serving in the benevolence of the poor and needy of our congregation and community
2. Serving in the assimilation of new members and the encouragement of all members of the church
3. Serving in the welcoming ministries to the visitors of the church
4. Serving in the organization and preparation of the ordinances
5. Serving in the care and maintenance of the church property
6. Serving in other responsibilities as assigned by the Board of Elders

ARTICLE IX

LICENSING AND ORDINATION

Section A. LICENSING

A license to perform marriages and other ministerial functions may be granted to candidates called to full-time Christian service. The call and qualifications of the candidate shall be reviewed by the Senior Pastor and, if approved, submitted to the Board of Elders for ratification. The church membership shall be advised at the next regular business meeting.

Section B. ORDINATION

Ordination to proclaim the Gospel of the grace of God may be granted to candidates called to the ministry of preaching. The call and qualifications of the candidate will be reviewed by the Senior Pastor. If he finds that the candidate meets the requirements, the Elder Board and then the church membership will be requested to approve by two-thirds majority of those present and voting the call of an Ordination Council.

If approval is granted, the Senior Pastor will call and fill the Ordination Council. The candidate must pass an examination to be specified by the council and that is consistent with the church’s Doctrinal Statement. The Ordination Council shall be empowered to proceed with ordination if the candidate is found qualified.

ARTICLE X

CHANGE OR AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

This Constitution may be amended at any regular or special business meeting of the church by a two-thirds vote of those qualified present and voting, provided a quorum is present. A quorum for the purpose of amending the Constitution shall be twenty percent of the total active church membership. Notice of such amendment shall have been given from the pulpit on two successive Sundays in advance and a copy of the proposed amendment shall have been posted.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I

DISCIPLINARY TERMINATION

Section A.

Any member who manifests willful, sinful behavior which is a clear violation of Scripture and which could damage the church (or any of its members), weaken its testimony, or promote disunity shall be subject to discipline as set forth in Matthew 18:15-22; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; and 1 Timothy 5:19-21. The Elder Board shall be vested with the ultimate authority to oversee discipline and to promulgate such disciplinary procedures as shall be consistent with the Word of God.

No offenses shall be brought before the church until the instructions of the Lord Jesus Christ have been followed as outlined in Matthew 5:23-24 and 18:15-16. When offended, individual members of the body are responsible to be obedient to these Scriptures and to personally confront the offender. Thereafter, the offender should be confronted by two or three members which may include members of the Elder Board. If the behavior continues, the Elder Board shall investigate the offenses as thoroughly as possible. Where the Elder Board is of the opinion that further discipline may be necessary, the offender shall be given the opportunity to appear before the Elder Board to personally present his/her own defense and be confronted by all the witnesses accessible and all facts ascertainable. After a fair and impartial hearing, the congregation shall be advised of the offense, if a majority of the Elder Board finds the offense to warrant such disclosure. Such disclosure will be made at a regular congregational or special called meeting. If the behavior continues, the Elder Board may withdraw membership and/or fellowship.

Section B.

The members of the church declare that in joining the church they have entered into a covenant to minister to one another's spiritual needs. This relationship is entered into by mutual consent with the church and congregation. Church discipline is intended for the upbuilding of the body by encouraging and restoration and repentance of the offender and by acting as a deterrent to the other members of the body. Therefore, members whose behavior is subject to discipline provided for in Section A. may not avoid disciplinary action by unilaterally withdrawing their membership from the church.

Further, in accordance with 1 Corinthians 6:1-8, the members of the church hereby covenant and agree that we will not pursue legal action or sue the church, the Pastors, Elders, Ministry Leaders, Church Staff, or any other members of the body who administer disciplinary action in accordance with their official duties and/or the terms and provisions of this Constitution.

ARTICLE II

COMMITTEES

Section A. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee shall consist of the Senior Pastor, or in the absence of a Senior Pastor the Board designee, School Board Chairman, Board of Elder Officers, and Chairman of each Standing Committee. This Committee shall be the primary interface between the Board of Elders and all Standing Committees. This Committee shall regularly review the financial status of the ministries; Standing Committee actions and requests; and develop recommendations to the Board of Elders. This Committee acts as an initial review and recommending committee of the Board of Elders.

Section B. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

This committee has the responsibility to serve as counsel to the Senior Pastor in personnel matters. The Personnel Committee consists of the Senior Pastor, or in the absence of a Senior Pastor the Board designee, the Chairman of the Elder Board, and two at-large elder members of the Executive Committee.

Section C. STANDING COMMITTEES

The Board of Elders shall carry out its work as much as possible through Standing Committees. Standing Committees are perpetuated committees that are sponsored by and accountable to the Board of Elders. Each Standing Committee is to function in coordination with its respective staff person. Standing Committees in function are to act in the following capacities: advisory, working, leadership, accountability, and encouraging. Standing Committees will channel all major issues to the Board of Elders and the church membership through the Executive Committee.

The Chairman of each Standing Committee must be a Lay Elder and the Vice-chairman must be a Vocational Elder chosen from the Elder Board. The chairman of a Standing Committee may serve a maximum of two years as chairman; however, to provide continuity in a committee, the chairman may be appointed for one additional one-year term for a maximum term as chairman of three years.

The members and Chairman of each Standing Committee shall be appointed or reappointed by the Board of Elders at the June Elder Board Meeting and shall serve for a one-year term expiring 30 June of the succeeding year. No non-Elder Standing Committee member shall serve on a committee for more than five consecutive years. No non-Elder Standing Committee member shall concurrently serve on more than one Standing Committee. Non-Elder Committee members shall have a minimum of one-year leave before reinstatement on the committee.

See Policy and Procedure Manual for the Board of Elders of Northside Baptist Church for Standing Committee responsibilities and committee composition.

Section D. SCHOOL BOARD

Recognizing that Northside Christian School is a unique entity and ministry of the church, the Board of Elders may establish a School Board to assist it in governing. This entity and its policies are governed by the authority granted in the School Board Governance Policy, which may be amended from time to time by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Elders.

Section E. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Vice-Chairman of the Board of Elders and four other elders shall serve as the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall present to the Board of Elders the recommendations for Chairman of the Board, Vice-Chairman of the Board, Church Clerk, and Treasurer.

This committee shall present to the church membership for election the name(s) to serve as Church Clerk, Church Treasurer, and members of the Elders Board. Church members may submit in writing suggested nominees to the Nominating Committee for any of these elected corporate positions. Members suggesting nominees must have made personal contact with such nominees and ascertained that they are willing to be nominated. The recommendations of this Committee shall be posted at least two Sundays prior to an election.

The Nominating Committee shall identify and actively recruit qualified candidates for the office of elder or ministry leader. This shall be an ongoing function of this committee the purpose of which is to at all times have a group of candidates who qualify or are in the process of qualifying for the office of elder or ministry leader.

Section F. SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Board of Elders may appoint such other committees as it may consider necessary. A pastoral search committee is an example of a special committee for a specific purpose.

ARTICLE III

PERSONNEL

All church employees (excluding elders) shall be employed and released at the discretion of the Senior Pastor in consultation with the Personnel Committee. The Board of Elders, by a three-fourths majority, may vote for the retention or removal of any staff member, other than the Senior Pastor. If the staff member in question is an elder, he shall not be entitled to vote on his own retention or removal. Any new administrative staff positions shall be approved by the Elder Board. All church employees shall be under the general supervision of the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor shall inform the Elder Board of any staff changes that have been made.

The Head of School shall be employed and released at the discretion of the NCS School Board. All Northside Christian School employees shall be under the supervision of the Head of School, and delegated authority is specified in the Northside Christian School Board Governance Policy.

ARTICLE IV

USE AND DISPOSITION OF CHURCH PROPERTY

Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the purpose for which the organization is organized are exclusively religious, charitable, and educational within the meaning of Section 501(C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 with the corresponding provision of any further United States Internal Revenue Law.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of these articles, this organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by an organization exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or the corresponding provision of any further United States Internal Revenue Law.

In the event of dissolution, the residual assets of the organization will be turned over to one or more organizations, which themselves are exempt as organizations described in Sections 501(C) (3) and 170(C) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or corresponding sections of any prior or further Internal Revenue Code or other federal, state, or local government for exclusive public purpose.

ARTICLE V

AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

No organization shall be formed or considered a part of the church ministries before its sponsors have submitted their plan to the appropriate Standing Committee, if applicable, for review and subsequent submission to the Executive Committee and the Elder Board for approval.

Presidents of all organizations, all Sunday School teachers, and teachers of children's activities shall be church members in good standing.

ARTICLE VI

CHANGE OR AMENDMENT TO THE BYLAWS

These Bylaws may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the church by a two-thirds vote of those qualified members present and voting, provided a quorum is present. A quorum for the purpose of amending the Constitution shall be twenty percent of the total active church membership. Notice of such amendment shall have been given from the pulpit on two successive Sundays in advance and a copy of the proposed amendment shall have been posted.