

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

BURKEMONT BAPTIST CHURCH

Adopted January 1992

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Constitution of Burkemont Baptist Church

PREAMBLE

For the purpose of affirming and preserving the principles of our faith and in order that this body be governed in an orderly manner, to facilitate the discovery of the will of God for this church, and the freedom of action of this church in its relationship to other churches, we do declare and establish this constitution.

COVENANT

HAVING BEEN LED as we believe by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord and, on the profession of 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 Godly knowledge, biblical holiness, and Christian compassion; 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, and 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 personal devotions; to diligently teach our children God's Word; 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 causing our brother/sister to stumble through any unrighteous act, attitude or deed; to exert our influence against the abuse of alcohol and other drugs and combat the spread of sexual sin and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Savior.

WE FURTHER ENGAGE to watch over one another in Christian 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.

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this church shall be Burkemont Baptist Church.

ARTICLE II - STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES AND BASIC BELIEFS

Seek the salvation of the lost. Teach and proclaim the Word of Truth. Disciple one another in love. Minister to the spiritual and physical needs of one another. Worship our Lord corporately and individually. Affirm that Jesus is the Lord of our lives.

We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired, inerrant, infallible, authoritative and sufficient Word of God and the basis for our beliefs. This church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of THE BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE 2000. We accept the call of Christ and band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind. (Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 1:8 and 2 Timothy 2:2)

ARTICLE III – AFFILIATION

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 By-Laws)

All internal groups formed 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 Southern Baptist Churches. Insofar as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the Catawba River Baptist Association, North Carolina Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

BY-LAWS of Burkemont Baptist Church

ARTICLE I - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: The membership of this church shall be composed of persons who have given evidence of spiritual rebirth, who have been baptized by immersion, who have been received by the church, and who will endeavor to uphold the Word of God and the Constitution and By-Laws of the church.

Section 2: A member of another Baptist church of like faith and order may be received by the church upon receipt of a Letter of Recommendation from that church upon successful completion of the new membership course and affirmation of the beliefs of Burkemont Baptist Church, candidates for membership will be presented for full church membership at a quarterly business meeting.

Section 3: A person may be received into membership upon statement that he or she has previously been a member of a Baptist church or if coming from another denomination gives evidence of spiritual rebirth and baptism by immersion upon successful completion of the new membership course and affirmation of the beliefs of Burkemont Baptist Church, candidates for membership will be presented for full church membership at a quarterly business meeting.

Section 4: A Letter of Recommendation may be granted to any church of like faith and order. When letters are granted, membership in this church terminates.

Section 5: When a member of this church joins a church of a different faith and order, membership in this church will immediately terminate.

Section 6: In considering the duties involved, members are expected, first of all, to be faithful in all duties essential to the Christian life; to attend regularly the services of the church; to give regularly to the cause of Christ; and to share in the organized work of the church.

Section 7: Prior to membership, all prospective candidates must complete a new membership class. Upon successful completion of the new membership course and affirmation of the beliefs of Burkemont Baptist Church, candidates for membership will be presented for full church membership at a quarterly business meeting.

ARTICLE II – CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Church discipline shall be exercised in accordance with the principles and practices mandated in Matthew 18:15-17 with a primary view to the ministry of reconciliation and restoration.

ARTICLE III - CHURCH ORDINANCES

Section 1: Baptism: A person who receives Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior by personal faith, who professes Him publicly at any worship service, and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord, shall be received for baptism. Baptism shall be by immersion in water and shall be administered by the Senior Pastor, or associate pastor or another qualified person.

Section 2: The Lord's Supper: The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby believers in the Lord Jesus Christ partake of the bread and fruit of the vine, there by commemorating the death and the return of Jesus Christ. The Senior Pastor and deacons shall be responsible for administration of the Lord's Supper.

ARTICLE IV - CHURCH OFFICERS

The officers of this church shall be the Senior Pastor, the Ministerial Staff, the Deacons, a Moderator, a Clerk, a Treasurer, and Trustees. All who serve as officers of this church must be members of the church.

Section 1: Senior Pastor: Whenever a vacancy occurs, a senior pastor search committee shall be nominated by the deacons and elected by the church to find a Senior Pastor. The pulpit committee, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, will seek out and present to the church a minister of the Gospel whose Christian character and qualifications, according to 1 Timothy 3:1-7, fit him for the office of Senior Pastor of this church. The committee shall bring only one name at a time for consideration by the church, and no nominations shall be accepted other than that of the committee. Election shall be at a meeting called only for that purpose and the membership of the church must be notified at least two weeks in advance from the pulpit and at least one week in advance in writing through all available communication methods used by the church. An affirmative vote of 75% of those present and voting shall constitute election.

The Senior Pastor, when elected, shall serve until the relationship is dissolved at the request of either the Senior Pastor or the church. In either case, at least thirty days' notice shall be given of the termination of the relationship, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon, with both the Senior Pastor and the church seeking to follow the will of God and the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

The Senior Pastor shall be in charge of the welfare and the oversight of the church. He shall be ex-officio member of all organizations, departments and committees. He may call a special meeting of the deacons or any committee according to the procedures which may be set forth in the By-Laws. He shall conduct religious services on stated and special occasions, administer the ordinances, minister to members of the church and community, and perform other duties that usually pertain to the position of the Senior Pastor. He shall have special charge of the pulpit ministry of the church. In cooperation with the deacons, he shall provide the pulpit supply when he is absent and arrange for workers to assist in revival meetings and other special services.

The Senior Pastor shall preside at all meetings of the church except as otherwise provided in the By-Laws. He shall be the administrative head of the church.

Section 1a: Interim Pastor – At such time the church is without a senior pastor, the deacon officers (Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary) will seek out an interim senior pastor. The candidate will be presented for approval to the deacons and then be presented to the church for a vote of affirmation.

Section 2: Ministerial Staff: This church, as it deems necessary, may call, or employ full time staff members such as: Associate Pastor, Minister of Education, Minister of Youth, etc. A search committee shall be nominated by the deacons and elected by the church to work jointly with the Senior Pastor in securing a qualified candidate. He shall be presented to the church for approval. The committee and Senior Pastor shall bring only one name at a time for consideration to the church. No nominations shall be accepted other than that of the committee and Senior Pastor. Election shall be at a meeting called only for that purpose and the membership of the church must be notified at least two weeks in advance from the pulpit and at least one week in advance in writing through all available communication methods used by the church. An affirmative vote of 75% of those present and voting shall constitute election.

The ministerial staff members shall assist the Senior Pastor in the shepherding of the flock.

Ministerial Staff members, when elected, shall serve until the relationship is dissolved at the request of either the staff member or the Senior Pastor. In either case, at least thirty days' notice shall be given of the termination of the relationship, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon, by both the staff member and the Senior Pastor.

Section 3a: Deacon: There shall be as many active (sitting) deacons as deemed necessary by the church for the performing of its ministries. Deacons shall serve on a rotating basis, and a full term shall be three years. Each year the assigned term of office of 1/3 of the number of deacons shall expire. An election shall be held to fill vacancies and to add to the deacon body such numbers as the church size warrants. In the event of death, removal, resignation, or incapacity to serve, the next in line shall be considered.

After serving a three-year assignment, or more than one-half of an unexpired term, a deacon shall be eligible for re-election only after the lapse of one year.

There shall be no obligation to constitute as an active deacon one who has been a deacon in another church, but if such person is chosen by this church as a deacon, his previous ordination by another church of like faith and order shall suffice for this church.

In accordance with the meaning of the work and practice in the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. Their task is to serve with the Senior Pastor and staff in performing the pastoral ministries of: (a) leading the church in the achievements of its objectives, (b) proclaiming the gospel to believers and unbelievers, and (c) caring for the wellbeing of the church and its members and other persons in the community.

Nominations for deacons shall be made by official ballot on the second and third Sundays in September. Each member making a nomination shall complete a nomination form. The number of men to be elected, receiving the highest number of votes shall be considered nominated. Prior to their names being placed before the church for possible election, the body of deacons shall consider the men so named, to determine if biblical and church qualification are being met according to 1 Timothy 3:8-13. For one to be eligible to be elected, he must be a member of this church for at least one year prior to election. The deacons will confer with these men to see whether they will serve if elected, and also to get commitment from them concerning their intentions as to the support of the entire church program. Should there be an impediment to the acceptance of the nomination: the next in line shall be considered.

On the first Sunday in November, the deacons then constituted shall present a slate of nominated deacons to the church members present for election to replace the then vacant positions. The slate shall be recommended to the church by unanimous decision of the deacons in consultation with the Senior Pastor. Upon presentation of the slate to the church members, the whole slate, and not a part thereof, shall be voted up or down by secret ballot. Election of the slate, as proposed by the deacons, shall be by supermajority vote of 75% of ballots cast. If the slate is voted down, it shall be returned to the deacons for further consideration. During the presentation of the slate, the moderator shall not entertain nominations from the floor or amendments of the slate. A minimum of two weeks shall pass between the presentation of the slate to the church members and the church election. This time period shall afford church members the opportunity to pray over the slate, ask questions, and discuss the slate with any of the deacons. The deacons shall elect officers and organize in whatever manner is necessary to fulfill their duties.

Section 3b: Deacon Emeritus: The church shall have the option of electing men as Deacon Emeritus. In order to be considered as Deacon Emeritus, a man must have served previously as a Deacon at Burkemont Baptist Church. He must be at least 70 years old in order to be considered as Deacon Emeritus and will be elected for life. A Deacon Emeritus will have the option of attending all deacon meetings and will be able to take part in all discussions and provide input at any meeting attended. The Deacon Emeritus shall also have voting privileges at any meeting attended. The then constituted deacons will recommend to the church the election of someone as Deacon Emeritus. If the church reaches a situation where there are more than three men elected by the church to the office of Deacon Emeritus, the Deacons will agree to rotate their participation with the then constituted deacons on a yearly basis.

1. Name(s) for office of Deacon Emeritus will be put forward to the Church by a unanimous vote from the Deacons in consultation with the Senior Pastor.
2. Supermajority vote of 75% of voted ballots for election to emeritus position.

Section 4: Moderator: The moderator shall be the Senior Pastor. In the absence of the Senior Pastor, (a) the Chairman, or (b) Vice Chairman of the Deacons shall preside.

Section 5: Trustees: The church shall have three trustees from among the body of deacons to serve as legal officers of 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 signatures of trustees are required, they shall sign legal documents related to church approved matters.

Section 6: Clerk: The clerk shall be elected annually by the church with the following duties: to attend, or be represented at the church business meetings; to keep accurate records of all business transactions; to prepare an annual associational letter and to notify all officers and members of committees to have their reports for the associational letter at the appointed time; to issue church membership Letters of Recommendation as requested by other churches; to preserve all papers and valuable letters and records that belong to the church, and preserve a true history of the church. The clerk, with the assistance of the church secretary, shall keep an accurate roll of the church membership with dates and methods of admission and dismissal to be reported at the business meetings.

Section 7: Treasurer: The treasurer shall be elected annually by the church. With the assistance of the church financial secretary, as outlined in the secretary's job description, the treasurer shall make prompt disbursements as authorized in the church budget.

The treasurer shall assist the church financial secretary in maintaining accurate records of all receipts and disbursements.

The treasurer shall be a member of the finance and budget committee and shall submit the financial records for examination monthly at the meeting of that committee.

Section 8: Other Personnel: Other personnel shall be secured by the Personnel Committee. These staff members, including secretaries and custodians, may resign by giving a two week notice to the church. The church may vote to abolish positions upon recommendation of the Personnel Committee. If a position is so abolished, termination shall be immediate with a compensation of two week's pay. Non-ministerial staff shall not be required to be members of this church. Two immediate family members (mother, father, son, daughter, husband, wife) shall not hold full time paid positions at the same time.

ARTICLE V- PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONS

Section 1: General: All organizations of the church shall be under church control, and all officers and teachers shall be members of the church and elected by the church. Each organization shall have such officers and organization as required.

Section 2: Sunday School: The Sunday School shall be the basic organization for the Bible teaching program and outreach. 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. The Sunday School shall be conducted under the direction of the Sunday School Director. The Sunday School Director shall be a member of the Nominating Committee.

ARTICLE VI-FINANCE

Section 1: The church shall follow the approved budget plan. The fiscal year for this plan shall be January 1 to December 31.

Section 2: Receipts from all sources, other than class love offerings, shall be channeled into one treasury except those otherwise designated.

Section 3: Building Fund monies will not be used by the church for any purpose other than building, paying off a mortgage, equipment replacement, or buying land to build on.

Section 4: Special offerings can be solicited within the church or in the name of the church only when approved by the deacons. This does not preclude individuals from making special offerings for designated causes. Special offerings will be used for no other purpose except as specified.

Section 5: Budget shall be so defined that the church and its related ministries shall be adequately provided for. Any organization or committee requiring funds for its operation shall submit such budget requests, with adequate support, for the following year to the Finance and Budget Committee on or before September 1. If this is not done, the group must abide by the budget prepared by the Finance and Budget Committee. Each committee shall be responsible for administering the approved budget. Expenditures of unusual amounts of budgeted funds shall be checked with the Finance Committee for availability of funds.

Section 6: Any request concerning unbudgeted funds shall go through the Finance and Budget Committee before submission to the church for approval.

Section 7: An experienced public accountant shall review the church finances annually.

Section 8: Those who have responsibility for counting and depositing of funds shall be insured or bonded, the church paying the fee.

Section 9: Contributions shall be recorded and treated as confidential information. Annual statements shall be rendered to contributors by January 31.

ARTICLE VII- PROGRAM SERVICES

Section 1: Church Media Center/Library: The Media Center/Library will be the resource center for the church. Its personnel will seek to provide and promote the use of printed and audiovisual resources. They will also provide consultation to church leaders and members in the use of printed and audiovisual resources.

Section 2: Sound/Light/Video Service: The Sound/Light/Video service operate the special sound and light equipment in the auditorium during all church services. It is responsible for the maintenance and operation of this equipment and will make recommendation for additions and improvements as needed.

ARTICLE VIII - CHURCH COMMITTEES

Section 1: GENERAL:

Standing Committee members shall be church members. Preferably, no church member shall serve on more than two standing committees at the same time. No person shall serve as chairman of more than one committee at a time. Committee members serve for a three-year term. The committee chairperson shall be elected by the committee members.

The Committee Chair will be responsible for presenting any item of business to the body of deacons for approval prior to presenting such matters to the Church.

Deacon representation is required by an active deacon on the following committees: Nominating, Personnel, Finance and Budget, Building Maintenance and Contracts.

Section 2: STANDING:

A. Nominating Committee: This committee shall prayerfully offer areas where members of the church could serve if willing.

After identifying the possible area of service for members, this committee shall nominate for church approval all heads of church program organization, program services, and standing committees. It will then assist these heads in securing workers by providing the names of church members who could serve if they would serve and were trained.

This committee shall work with officers, directors, and committees in the proper understanding of their duties and responsibilities.

B. Personnel Committee: This committee shall be composed of one active deacon, the chairman of the Finance and Budget Committee, and the Building Committee chairman, and three at-large members.

The committee will assist the church in matters related to employed personnel administration including those called by church action. Its work includes such areas as staff needs, job descriptions, salaries, benefits, compensation policies, personnel services, regular (annual or semi-annual) evaluations, resolution of grievances and job-related problems.

C. Finance and Budget Committee: This committee develops and recommends a unified church budget. It supervises the administration of the church budget. This committee chairman shall examine the church financial records monthly. This committee shall direct a certified public accountant to review church finances annually. The Finance and Budget Committee shall prepare detailed monthly financial reports and make them available to the Church. These reports will be presented to the Church at the quarterly business meeting. In addition, the offering totals shall be published in the weekly church bulletin.

The treasurer and teller committee chair shall be ex-officio members.

This committee shall confirm that the tellers, treasurer, and church secretary are bonded.

The Finance and Budget Committee has the authority to spend up to \$1,000 for non-budgeted items.

D. Contract Committee: This committee is charged with soliciting, awarding, and overseeing contract services within the church. Such contracts may include lawn maintenance, office supplies, office equipment, etc. This committee will consist of five members including three at-large members, an active Finance and Budget Committee representative and an active deacon. The lead secretary of the church will serve as an ex-officio member of the committee.

E. Committees: The church shall elect special committees as may be deemed necessary to carry on the various phases of the programs of the church. These committees shall be elected by the church upon the recommendation of the Nominating Committee unless the church directs their appointment in a different manner. All committees serve at the pleasure of the church and shall in no event have any authority to act for the church except where specifically authorized.

The composition, duties and means of election of all committees shall be established by the church and set forth in a committee policy handbook and made available upon request.

ARTICLE IX - CHURCH MEETINGS

Section 1: Worship Services: The church shall meet on Sundays and Wednesdays to worship God, to equip the saints and to evangelize the lost.

Section 2: Special Services: Revival services and other church meetings essential in the promotion of the objectives of the church shall be held as needed.

Section 3: Regular Business Meetings: Regular business meetings shall be held quarterly and shall be immediately after regularly scheduled worship services within the first three weeks of the new quarter based on a calendar year, unless otherwise necessary.

Section 4: Special Business Meetings: Special business meetings to consider any matter except that of constitutional change, or amendment, will be called by the Senior Pastor, deacons, or church clerk upon written request of ten members of the church with a specified purpose. The time and purpose are to be announced at least one week in advance from the pulpit and every member is to be notified in writing at least three days in advance through all available communication methods used by the church. Only the announced business may be transacted at such meetings.

Section 5: Quorum: The Quorum consists of members who attend the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called. Those qualified to call a meeting are the Senior Pastor, Chairman of the Deacons, and Vice-Chairman of the Deacons.

Section 6: Rules of Order:

ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER will be used as the official document of order.

Such as:

- A. All business shall be presented by a motion, made by one member, and seconded by another, and presented to the church clerk in writing by the presenter.
- B. No discussion can properly be started until the motion is made, seconded, and stated by the moderator.
- C. A motion cannot be withdrawn after it has been discussed, except by unanimous consent of the body.
- D. Any motion made and seconded relating to church finances will be referred to the appropriate committee for consideration. Other motions, after being discussed, must be put to a vote (unless withdrawn), laid on the table, referred or postponed.
- E. A motion made on the floor should be forwarded to the appropriate committee for review and the committee will bring a recommendation at the next business meeting.
- F. A motion lost, not seconded, should not be recorded, except so ordered by the body at the time.
- G. A motion lost cannot be renewed at the same meeting, except by unanimous consent.
- H. A motion should contain but one distinct proposition. If it contains more, it must be divided at the request of any member and the propositions acted on separately.
- I. Only one question can properly be before the meeting at one time. No second motion can be allowed to interrupt one already under debate, except a motion to amend, to substitute, to commit, to postpone, to lay on the table, for the previous question, or to adjourn.

- J. The subsidiary meeting motions just named cannot be interrupted by any other motion: nor can any other motion be applied to them, except that to amend, which may be done by specifying some time, place, or purpose.
- K. Nor can these motions interrupt or supersede each other; only that motion to adjourn is always in order, except while a member has the floor, or a question is being taken. A motion to adjourn need not be seconded.

ARTICLE X – MARRIAGE AND HUMAN SEXUALITY

Section 1: What We Believe About Marriage and Human Sexuality

We believe, based on the teaching of the Scriptures in the Old and New Testaments, that marriage is an institution ordained by God from the foundation of the world, and intended as a lifelong union of one man and one woman. This idea is supported by the account of creation in Genesis chapters 1 and 2. Genesis 1:26-28 provides that God created man in His own image, both male and female. The passage implies that a unity of one man and one woman is in some way necessary to fully represent the image of God in mankind.

Genesis chapter 2 provides a more detailed account in which God created the first man, Adam, and decided that it was not good for him to be alone. (Genesis 2:18). God indicated that He would make "a suitable helper for him." God brought all of the animals to Adam, but none of them was a suitable helper for him, so God then created Eve, the first woman, from part of Adam himself. God did not create a second man to be Adam's helpmate, or an assortment of multiple women, but rather one woman. Together they were man and wife and had "no shame" or sin in their union with each other. (Genesis 2:15-25).

Jesus Christ reaffirmed the teaching of the Old Testament when He said, as recorded in Matthew 19:4-6, "And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

The Apostle Paul states in Ephesians 5:22-32 that marriage is not merely a human institution but is a special divine metaphor that is supposed to illustrate the union of Christ and the church. For this reason, also, only a union between a man and a woman can be a proper marriage because a union between two men, two women, or one man and multiple women or any collection of people could not properly illustrate the relationship between Christ and His church.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 condemns a variety of lifestyles including those associated with adultery, prostitution and homosexuality. The Bible condemns all forms of sexual immorality and encourages Christians to flee from it because of its destructive effects, and because the body of the Christian is the temple of the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 3:16 and 6:12-20).

Romans 1:18-32 makes it clear that it is not only sinful to engage in homosexual unions, but also to approve of such sins in others or encourage their practice. As a result, in order to maintain our consistent Christian witness, we cannot sanction, approve, or promote in any way adultery, fornication (a sexual relationship between an unmarried man and woman, i.e. "living together"), pornography, pedophilia, polygamy, bestiality, or homosexual unions. This is made clear also by countless other verses throughout the Old Testament as well as by these and other passages in the New Testament.

Our church follows what the Bible reveals as the "sure foundation" of the teachings of Jesus Christ and his apostles (Matthew 7:24-29 and 1 Corinthians 14:37). The church is called to teach and practice these teachings and is not at liberty to depart from them for a different authority if it is to authentically bear the name "Christian." Though we strive to live peaceably with all people and to obey legitimate government authority, in instances involving matters as foundational as marriage we must ultimately obey God rather than man if the two come into conflict (Acts 4:18-22).

Sexual activities outside of marriage, including but not limited to fornication, adultery, incest, homosexuality, pedophilia, polygamy and bestiality are inconsistent with the teachings of the Bible and the church. Lewd conduct, transgender behavior, and the creation or distribution or the viewing of pornography are incompatible with God's intention.

Section 2: Our Faith Based Policy on Marriage and Human Sexuality

As a result of these above-described religious beliefs and our belief in the need for a practice of fidelity to these beliefs, it is our policy that the facilities of this church may not be used for any ceremony that in any way approves of, solemnizes, supports or allows a same-sex union or a polygamist or any union which, in the judgment of the church, is inconsistent with our beliefs. It is also the policy of the church that no pastor or member of the church staff shall officiate at any ceremony designed to solemnize, promote, create, or approve of such a union. Nor may any member of the church enter into such a union without being subject to church discipline.

A civil government's sanction of a union will be recognized as a legitimate marriage by the church only to the extent that it is consistent with the definition of marriage found in this Policy Statement.

Section 3: Church Policy Regarding Sexuality

Recognizing that we all struggle with sin, Burkemont Baptist Church will provide an environment that welcomes people who struggle with sexual sin. We will seek to love all people in Jesus' name, pointing them towards Christ's power to forgive and heal. While the Bible teaches that those who engage in sexual sin, sin against their own body we also recognize that sexual sin is not characterized in Scripture as being more severe than other forms of sin. We will seek God to discern ways that we can directly and indirectly minister and share God's love with those who struggle with every kind of sin. We also recognize that there is a difference between temptation and behavior and while temptation is sometimes unavoidable, we are responsible for our behavior.

Church Practices Derived from this Policy

Ministers

1. Ordained or duly licensed ministers of the Gospel employed by the church shall affirm the statement of faith on marriage and human sexuality adopted by this church.
2. Only ordained or duly licensed ministers of the Gospel approved by the church pastoral staff shall officiate at marriage ceremonies conducted on church property.
3. Ministerial staff employed by the church shall be subject to dismissal for violating this statement of faith on marriage and human sexuality or by officiating at a marriage ceremony that violates the letter or the spirit of this policy.
4. Pastors shall not officiate at a same sex or trans-gender marriage ceremony regardless of where it is held.

Applicants for Weddings Performed by Church Staff:

1. Applicants wishing to have a ceremony performed by a member of the ministerial staff employed or a duly licensed minister of the Gospel approved by the ministerial staff or to use the church facilities for their wedding shall affirm the statement of faith regarding marriage and human sexuality and shall conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent therewith.
2. Applicants shall participate in premarital counseling by ministerial staff employed by this church or a duly licensed minister of the Gospel who, in the sole opinion of the pastoral staff of the church have the appropriate training, experience, and spiritual understanding to provide such counseling. All ministerial staff or duly licensed ministers of the Gospel providing premarital counseling shall affirm the statement of faith of this church on marriage and human sexuality.

Use of Facilities:

1. Any marriage performed on church premises shall be officiated by an ordained or a duly licensed minister of the Gospel. Any officiate not employed by the Burkemont Baptist Church shall serve at the discretion of the Senior Pastor or deacons.
2. Ministers officiating marriage ceremonies on church premises, whether or not employed by the church, shall affirm their agreement with the statement of faith on marriage and human sexuality adopted by this church and conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent therewith.
3. Ministerial staff assigned by the church to implement the procedures contained in this Marriage Policy may, in his discretion, decline to provide church facilities for, and/or decline to officiate at a ceremony when in his judgment, there are significant concerns that one or both of the applicants may not be qualified to enter into the sacred bond of marriage for theological, doctrinal, moral or legal reasons.

Membership, Leadership and Staff:

1. Every minister and employee, hired by the church shall affirm their agreement with Burkemont Baptist Church statement on marriage and human sexuality and conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent therewith.
2. Church officers will be asked to affirm their agreement with this policy on marriage and human sexuality and shall conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent

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3. Church leaders, teachers and members are expected to teach and live in a manner that is consistent with this policy.

ARTICLE XI-GENERAL

Section 1: License: When a member of the church announces to the church that he feels the call to the Gospel Ministry and upon recommendation of the Senior Pastor, the church, by majority vote, may license him as an acknowledgement to his call to the ministry and as encouragement to make preparation for it. The church clerk may provide the member with a certificate of license as his credentials. It is understood that the performance of civil duties by the member shall be governed by state law.

Section 2: Ordination: Should this church be requested to ordain a member, who has been called as Pastor of a church of like faith and order, the following procedure shall be followed: The church express its approval at a regular or specially called business meeting by majority vote. The church shall invite the Catawba River Baptist Association Ordination Committee to examine the candidate and report to the church. In the event the report of this committee is favorable, the church shall proceed with ordination.

Section 3: Affiliation with Associations and Conventions: We recognize that there may be mutual helpfulness in the association of churches who are in such agreement in faith and practice as to encourage the spirit of fellowship and goodwill. We also recognize that there have been devised, through the voluntary cooperation of churches of like faith and order, organizations whose purpose it is to implement the missions, education, and benevolent interest and obligations of the individual Christian and his church family. It is the intention of this church to encourage such affiliation with our Association and Convention.

Section 4: Property Holding: It is agreed that the securing and maintaining of property, buildings, and equipment by this church shall be for the express purpose of providing facilities for public worship, and for the engagement upon missionary, education, and benevolent interests of this church, of the character and in the spirit of the Constitution and Constitution and By-Laws of this congregation.

Section 5: Autonomous Body: In all matters relating to the affairs of this church, it shall remain an autonomous body.

Section 6: Church Cemetery: Due to limited space, the church cemetery may be used for burial of members and their immediate family only (mother, father, son, daughter, husband, and wife). Any exceptions must be decided by the Cemetery Committee and deacons.

Section 7: Selling: Any non-ministry related item to be sold on church property must first be approved by the deacon leadership.

ARTICLE XII - ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS

Section 1: This Constitution and By-Laws shall be considered adopted and in immediate effect if and when, at the business meeting at which it is considered, the members present accept it by two-thirds majority vote. The adoption of this Constitution and By-Laws shall affect a repeal of all previously adopted rules in conflict herewith.

Section 2: A copy of this Constitution and By-Laws shall at all times be kept in the church office and on file with the Church Clerk. A copy shall be available to all member families upon request.

Section 3: This Constitution and By-Laws may be amended or altered at any regular or called business meeting by a two-thirds majority vote, provided that the proposed amendment or alteration is presented to the church at least one week in advance in writing through all available communication methods used by the church.