

# FRIENDSHIP BAPTIST CHURCH MISSION STATEMENT, CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

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## MISSION STATEMENT FOR FRIENDSHIP BAPTIST CHURCH

Church Motto: "Bringing families together in Christ for today, for eternity."

As individuals and as a Church body we will seek to glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in all that we do.

Romans 15:6

We will seek to teach and preach the Living Word of God to all who will listen and hear.

Romans 10:17

We desire to be used and useful to our Lord and Savior in reaching out to the lost all around us, starting in our community and going to the uttermost parts of the Earth.

I Timothy 2:4

Lastly, we desire and will do all that is within our power to do, to have unity of purpose, unity of mind, and unity of deed, so that our Lord and Savior will be glorified and lifted up.

John 17:23

In Summary, we will:

- 1) Glorify God in all that we do.
- 2) Teach and preach the Word.
- 3) Reach out to the lost.
- 4) Seek unity of the Body.

**THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF  
FRIENDSHIP BAPTIST CHURCH  
4345 Friendship Road  
Tallassee, AL**

A Church is a living organization in a changing world. A Church, like a community or an individual, is always changing. Fundamental doctrines remain the same, but the methods of teaching these doctrines and of reaching objectives must change if the outreach of the Church is to be effective.

A Church Constitution and Bylaws are essential if the democratic procedures are to be followed through the years. These instruments serve as a guide for the members to follow in carrying out the work of the Church.

Basic principles 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 would be emphasized, however, that both the constitution and bylaws should be reviewed annually. As the program of the Church changes, so must its rules of governmental procedure be brought up to date.

The basic advantages of a constitution and bylaws are these:

- 1) Members are furnished a written statement of their Church government.
- 2) Democracy is preserved since predetermined rules have already been established by the members.
- 3) Orderly procedures are provided for guiding the transaction of Church business.
- 4) A basis for solving potential problems is established before problems arise.

## CONSTITUTION

### **I. PREAMBLE**

For the more certain preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and in order that this body may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the accepted tenets of the Southern Baptist Convention, and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of this Church and the freedom of action of this body with respect to other Churches of like faith and doctrine, we do declare and establish this Constitution.

### **II. NAME**

This body shall be known as “The Friendship Baptist Church”. The Friendship Baptist Church, of Tallassee, Alabama, is a body corporate; the certificate of incorporation was filed in May, 1964.

### **III. PURPOSE**

This Church is composed of baptized believers brought together and established by Jesus Christ for the purpose of:

- 1) Glorifying and worshipping The Lord our God.
- 2) Reading, studying, and teaching His Holy Word, the Bible.
- 3) Teaching and preaching the Gospel of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.
- 4) Training others to follow in the practice of Christian faith.
- 5) To promote, maintain, and aid in righteous living among our members.
- 6) And to reach out to a lost world with the message of hope and salvation, that only Christ can give.

### **IV. POLITY**

The government of this Church is vested in the body of baptized believers who compose it. It is subject to no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Churches of the Southern Baptist Convention.

### **V. DOCTRINE**

The Holy Bible alone is the standard by which all matters of belief and conduct are to be measured.

### **VI. 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, angels, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter covenant with one another, as on 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 support of the ministry, the expense of the Church, the relief of the poor, and the spread 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 to our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; 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 each other in prayer; to aid each other 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.

## BYLAWS

### ARTICLE I – 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.

The membership of this Church shall be all whose names are duly inscribed on the Church Rolls as maintained by the Church Clerk.

#### **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 service for membership in any of the following ways:

- 1) By profession of faith and for baptism according to the policies of this Church.
- 2) By promise of a letter from another Baptist Church of like faith and order.
- 3) By statement or restoration of a prior conversion experience and baptism in a Baptist Church, when no letter is obtainable.

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

#### **Section 3 – New Member Orientation**

New members of this Church are encouraged to participate in the Church's new member orientation as offered.

#### **Section 4 – Duties**

Members are expected to be faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian life, to attend regularly the services of this Church, to give regularly for its support and its causes, and to share in the work of the Church. Members should be willing to accept positions of responsibility in this Church, and to give of their time and use their spiritual gifts to carry out the functions of that responsibility.

#### **Section 5 – Rights of Members**

- 1) Every active member of the Church is entitled to vote in all elections and on all questions submitted to the Church in business conference, provided the member is present.

- 2) Every active member of the Church is eligible for consideration by the membership as candidates for elective offices in the Church.

### **Section 6 – Inactive Members**

- 1) Those members who have not attended a worship service in the past six months will be considered inactive. Members serving in the military, on the mission field, attending college, or homebound are exempt.
- 2) The Pastor and Deacons will contact inactive members for the purpose of encouraging them to attend worship services.
- 3) If, after being contacted by the Pastor and the Deacons, the member remains inactive for three additional months, the Pastor and Deacons will contact the member again and encourage them to resume worship service attendance. If the member fails to become active after an additional three months, the person's name will remain inactive on the membership roll.

### **Section 7 – Discipline**

It is expected that if a member sins against another, he will go to the person seeking forgiveness and reconciliation and offering restitution, as required by Matthew 5:23-24. Any member having a complaint against another must seek to resolve the conflict as directed in Matthew 18:15-17. The aim is to secure repentance and full reconciliation. If one is not able to effect reconciliation, then he should go to the deacons for counsel and assistance. They shall follow principles in Matthew 18:15-17, Galatians 6:1-2, 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 5, 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 2, 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 3, James 3; 5:19-20, and Jude 22-23. Church discipline has the purpose of protecting the purity, unity, and message of the church. All discipline shall be carried out in the spirit of Christ, in humility and Godly fear, and with caution. It is understood that when a person joins the church, he or she is voluntarily giving fellow members the right to hold them accountable in their walk with Christ.

## **ARTICLE II – GENERAL OFFICERS**

All who serve as officers of the Church and those who serve on Church committees shall be members of this Church. The officers shall consider it part of his/her responsibility to promote loyalty and efficiency in Church life and promote in every way, scriptural giving.

The officers of the Church shall be:

### **Section 1 – Pastor**

The pastor is responsible for leading the Church to function as a New Testament Church. The pastor will guide the general direction of the Church, and will lead the congregation, the organizations, and the Church staff to perform their tasks.

The pastor is the leader of the pastoral ministries in the Church. As such he works with the deacons and the Church staff to:

- 1) lead the Church in the achievement of its mission,
- 2) proclaim the gospel to believers and nonbelievers, and
- 3) to care for the Church's members and other persons in the community.

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

A pulpit committee shall be elected by the Church to seek out a suitable pastor, and its recommendation will constitute a nomination. Any member has the privilege of making recommendations to the committee. Only one nominee at a time shall be brought to the Church for consideration, by the pulpit committee. When a nomination has been presented, the Church shall prayerfully consider the nominee before the election is held. Election shall be by ballot, an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present being necessary to elect the nominee. The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or by mutual consent.

The pastor shall preside as moderator at Church business conferences, but in his absence, the chairman of the deacons, shall serve as moderator pro tem. The pastor may also request another church member to serve as moderator pro tem.

Pastor and Church relationship is of the utmost importance. All should strive to maintain a proper rapport with the pastor. Should there exist a conflict between the pastor and members or a member, the member(s) should first attempt to meet with the pastor and endeavor to resolve differences. If the complainants are denied a meeting with the pastor or finds that they and the pastor are not able to reach a satisfactory agreement and the matter is of serious importance, they may report the matter to the Pastor/Church Liaison Committee. The committee and the complainant shall meet with the pastor to discuss the matter to attempt reconciliation.

The Church may declare the office of pastor to be vacant, if gross misconduct or immoral action by the pastor, warrants such action. Such action shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's public notice has been given. The same procedure will be followed in Article I, Section 7 of these bylaws for the termination of a Church member.

The pastor shall be entitled to two weeks of vacation time during his first through the fifth year of service. After five years of service starting his sixth year, he will be eligible for three weeks of vacation. If by reason of service of 15 years or more, the pastor shall be entitled to four weeks of vacation a year. During the time of vacation, the pastor shall be released from all Church obligations in order that he may be renewed physically and spiritually and return to his task with restored vigor.

The pastor shall be released to serve in revivals held by other Churches for a period not to exceed two weeks in any fiscal year, without prior approval of the Church. The pastor shall be released from all Church obligations during this period of service, provided it is mutually agreeable with Church and pastor.

The pastor may relinquish the office of pastor by giving at least two weeks notice to the Church at the time of resignation.

## Section 2 – Deacons

Electing and ordaining deacons, for service to the Church family, is scriptural and it is important in Church history.

The New Testament role of the deacon is described in Acts 6. From the Scripture, we can know, first and foremost, that theirs were efforts to provide for the practical needs of the Church family. The NIV indicates that the Greek word used to describe their responsibility (“wait on”), is the verb from which the noun “deacon” comes.

Such efforts were characterized as being of invaluable assistance to the twelve apostles, the first followers of Jesus Christ and earliest leaders of the Christian Church – equivalent to our pastor today. This close assistance freed the apostles; and should free our modern day pastor also, in order to give his “attention to prayer and the ministry of the Word”. (Acts 6:46)

Inseparable from their role of ministering to the practical needs of the Church family was the need to do so impartially, promoting peace and harmony by their efforts. Such is descriptive of the Christian character of a man who would be elected deacon, in that the apostles in Acts 6:3 directed the Church to choose from among them “men...who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom.”

Further description of a man who would be elected and ordained as deacon is given in I Timothy 3: 8-12: “worthy of respect; sincere; not indulging in much wine; and not pursuing dishonest gain.” “They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience.” And, they must “be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well.”

Paul also instructs Timothy here in verse 10, that a man who would be deacon “must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against him, let them serve as deacons.”

With these Scriptures in mind, Friendship Baptist Church will elect and ordain deacons to be of assistance to the pastor and in service to the Church family in the following manner:

- 1) The Church will take the opportunity to observe for a sufficient time the Christian character of the man prior to his being considered as a candidate for the deacon ministry. (I Timothy 3:10)

He should be full of “spirit and wisdom” as evidenced by his cheerful giving of his time and talents to the Church; he should set an example of stewardship in giving the Lord’s tithe and offerings.

He should be a regular attendee of the services of the Church.

He should model Christ’s behavior in being a servant and promoting Christian harmony within the Church family.

Further characteristics are given in I Timothy 3:8-12 as noted above.

- 2) The Church will elect/ordain a sufficient number of deacons to assist the pastor.

- 3) Church members may make nominations for deacon during the month of August, keeping the qualifications from 1 Timothy 3 in mind.
- 4) The Pastor and/or active deacons will contact the nominees to ascertain their willingness to serve.
- 5) The election of new deacons (and ordination, if necessary), will take place the second Sunday in September or at some other time if there is a valid reason to change the date or should growth of the Church necessitate further deacons to serve or should a deacon cease to serve (death, retirement, or recall).
- 6) While the ordination of a deacon is for life – God’s blessing – he shall be elected for one term lasting for a maximum of three years. His term may be less than three years if he is elected to fill the remainder of a term left by a deacon who ceased to serve. A deacon may be elected to serve another three-year term after one (1) year absence from the body of active deacons. A deacon elected and ordained to active service may serve his full term so long as the Church is satisfied that he is fulfilling his duties and living a daily Christian witness consistent with the model and teachings of Christ.
- 7) The Church may recall a deacon from active service should he no longer meet the qualifications of serving as a deacon or should his ministry produce strife, conflict or disharmony within the Church family.
- 8) A deacon must be willing to work in close association with any pastor called to serve in the Church; he must agree to pray for and support the pastor and all church ministry efforts.
- 9) A deacon must be disciplined by the pastor to learn the duties and responsibilities of a deacon and together determine where his efforts for the Church family can best be served.

### **Section 3 – Church Clerk**

The Church shall annually elect a Church Clerk. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a suitable record of all official actions of the Church.

The clerk shall keep a register of the names and as current as possible, addresses of members, with dates of admission, dismissal, death, erasure, together with a record of baptisms. The clerk shall issue letters of recommendation/transfer when voted on by the Church, preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give required notice of all meetings where notice is necessary, as indicated in these bylaws.

The clerk shall be responsible for preparing the annual Church letter of the Church to the Association and the Convention.

### **Section 4 – Treasurer**

The Church shall annually elect a Church treasurer. The treasurer shall be responsible to account for all Church income, pay all authorized bills as designated by the Church budget, or official action by the Church, and preserve all things of value paid to or given to the Church. The treasurer shall keep at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. All funds, for any and all purposes, shall be accounted for by the treasurer.

It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render at each business conference a report of receipts and disbursements since the preceding conference.

All books, receipts, records and accounts kept by the treasurer shall be considered the property of the Church and as such, open at all times to inspection by any member of the Church. The treasurer is responsible for compiling and filling out the forms required by the Internal Revenue Service regulations concerning payroll tax and any other informational return required by the current tax law.

The treasurer shall be bonded, the Church paying the required fee to purchase such bond.

The treasurer's report(s) and records shall be reviewed and/or audited every other year by a recognized financial professional

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 to the Church clerk, who shall keep and preserve the account as part of the permanent records of the Church.

### **Section 5 – Financial Secretary**

The financial secretary shall be elected by the Church annually. The financial secretary will record each individual's gifts and offerings on each member's individual record of contributions.

At least quarterly, each member's individual record of contributions shall be totaled and recorded.

A record of contributions for the calendar year should be distributed annually to each Church member by the financial secretary.

It is the duty of the financial secretary to make sure that the church is in compliance with Internal Revenue Service regulations regarding individual gifts, keeping accurate and up to date records for the period of time required by tax law.

### **Section 6 – Trustees**

This Church shall elect annually three (or more), trustees to serve as legal officers of the Church as provided in the articles of incorporation.

They shall hold in trust the Church property. Upon a specific vote of the Church authorizing such action, they shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer Church property. When the signatures of trustees are required, they shall sign legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property, or other legal documents related to Church approved matters.

It shall also be the duty of the trustees to see that the Church is adequately insured and to care for the corporate welfare of the Church.

## Section 7 – Church Staff

The ministerial staff shall be called and employed by the Church as the Church determines the need for such offices. A job description shall be written when the need for a staff member is determined. The pastor shall be the overall administrator of the ministerial staff.

The non-ministerial staff shall be called and employed by the Church as the Church determines the need for such offices. The Church with the recommendation of the appropriate committee shall have the authority to employ and to terminate services of non-ministerial staff members.

The Church stewardship committee shall review the salary of both the ministerial and non-ministerial staff and make recommendations to the Church as to merit raises on an annual basis.

## ARTICLE III – COMMITTEES AND MINISTRY TEAMS

### Section I – Committees

There shall be two standing committees, the Stewardship Committee and the Counting Committee.

- 1) **Stewardship Committee** - This committee is responsible for formulating a sound operating budget which is missions and ministry-minded, for promoting the budget in particular and biblical stewardship in general, and to see that regular reviews of the church books are done as prescribed. This committee shall be composed of no more than two deacons, the senior of which shall be chairman, the church treasurer, the financial secretary, and two at-large members that are nominated and voted on by the church.
- 2) **Counting Committee** – This committee is responsible for counting all monies received during all church services. This committee shall be composed of one deacon and at least two at-large members that are nominated and voted on by the church.

**Pastor Search Committee** – When a vacancy occurs in the office of pastor, this committee is formed and voted on by the church. The committee is made up of no more than two active deacons, the senior of which shall be chairman, and three at-large members that are nominated and voted on by the church. This committee seeks out the best candidate for pastor and must come to a unanimous agreement on the minister to be invited to preach a trial sermon. The church shall be given notice as to when the trial sermon will be preached. Suitable ballots will be prepared by the church secretary for the use of the members. The vote shall be a secret ballot and a call will be extended provided 75% of the votes cast are favorable. Once the office of pastor is filled, this committee ceases to function.

### Section II – Ministry Teams

There shall be three kinds of teams: Ministry Teams, Service Teams, and Teaching Teams. A Ministry Team shall carry out a concerted ministry for the church. A Service Team's work is periodic and may require little planning time. A Teaching Team provides leadership in the Sunday School or in training disciples.

The church may establish teams as needed to lead and oversee ministries of the church. A simple majority vote of those present and voting during a business meeting shall be required to establish a team and approve its mission.

A Team Leader for each team will be named by the Pastor and deacons by the end of May. By the end of June, Team Leaders will select and enlist members for their teams. Team Leaders will provide the team's mission to potential team members and discuss it with them. The term of service for team members will begin on September 1.

Each team will have three to five members as determined by the team leader. Teams are responsible for their areas of ministry and may involve others in the church body to accomplish their mission. Teams will regularly gather to evaluate the effectiveness of their work and to measure their progress. Teams will report their progress to the church at regularly scheduled business meetings.

## **ARTICLE IV – CHURCH MEETINGS**

### **Section 1 – Services**

The Church shall meet regularly for worship of Almighty God. Prayer, praise, preaching, instruction, and evangelism shall be among the ingredients of these services. Such meetings shall be open for the entire membership of the Church, and for all others who may choose to attend.

The Church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning before morning worship for the purpose of intensive Bible Study. The Sunday School program is under the direction of a Sunday School director. Adequate teachers and classes shall be provided for all who will attend. Sunday School by its very nature is evangelistic and inclusive. It is entrusted to be the major outreach arm of the Church. Ideally, the teachers and helpers for the Sunday school are members of the Church.

### **Section 2 – Business Meetings**

A regular business meeting will be held quarterly on the Third Sunday of the months of February, May, August, and November. Any business requiring Church action is transacted at this time.

The Church may conduct called business meetings to consider matters of a special nature and significance. A one-week notice must be given for specially called business meetings, unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical, at which time the pastor and the chairman of the deacons can waive the necessity of notification, and call a special meeting. (This will only be done in extremely rare cases.)

The quorum consists of those members, who attend the business meeting. Any member of this Church can participate in the meeting and is encouraged to vote their conscience; however, every member should strive to maintain active attendance and service to the Church. This will enable every member to effectively discern and direct our Church's fulfillment of its mission and to promote unity in the conduct of our Church's business.

Robert's Rules of Order (not any particular edition) shall serve as a guide for conducting business meetings. As a Southern Baptist Church, we only recognize one authority as absolute, and that is the Holy Bible. The Church may deviate from Robert's Rules of Order whenever it is the will of the Church to do so. The purpose of using Robert's Rules of Order is the same as that stated in the introduction of the Constitution and Bylaws in reference to purpose for the Constitution and Bylaws, and is as follows:

“These instruments serve as a guide for the members to follow in carrying out the work of the Church.”

The purpose of the Constitution and Bylaws, and Robert's Rules of Order is to help facilitate the business of the Church in an orderly manner which provides the opportunity for every member to be involved and, at the same time, promotes peace and unity within the Church.

## **ARTICLE V – CHURCH ORDINANCES**

### **Section 1 – The Lord's Supper**

The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least once a quarter, with the pastor and the deacons administering the elements of the Lord's Supper.

### **Section 2 – Baptism**

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

- 1) Baptism shall be immersion in water.
- 2) The pastor, or whomever the Church shall authorize, shall administer baptism.
- 3) Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service of the Church.

## **ARTICLE VI – CHURCH FINANCES**

### **Section 1 – Budget**

The Stewardship Committee shall prepare and submit to the Church for approval at the regular business meeting in August, an inclusive unified budget indicating by items the amount needed and sought for all local and other expenses.

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

**Section 2 – Accounting Procedures**

A system of accounting that will adequately record for all Church funds and expenses will be used and administered by the. The treasurer's report(s) and records shall be reviewed and/or audited every other year by a recognized financial professional.

**Section 3 – Fiscal Year**

The Church fiscal year shall run concurrently with the Church year which begins on September 1 and ends on August 31.

**ARTICLE VII – AMENDMENTS**

Changes in the Constitution and Bylaws may be made at any regular business meeting of the Church. Each amendment shall be presented in writing at a previous business meeting. Amendments to the Constitution shall require a two-thirds vote of the members present.