

# **CONSTITUTION AND BY LAWS SALEM AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH**

## **CONSTITUTION**

### **I. NAME**

This body shall be known as the Salem Avenue Baptist Church, located at 1501 E. Highway 72, Rolla, Missouri.

### **II. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this body shall be to:

Provide regular opportunities for public worship.

Uphold and support the ordinances, doctrines, and ethics set forth in the New Testament for the local church.

Teach its members through a program of Christian education.

Channel its offerings to the support and the work of the New Testament church.

Preach and propagare among all people the gospel of the revelation of God through Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

### **III. ARTICLES OF FAITH**

The Articles of Faith adopted by this church are contained in the tract, the "Baptist Faith and Message", and are usually referred to as the Memphis Confession, having been adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in its meeting at Memphis, Tennessee, in 1925. These are adapted from the New Hampshire and Philadelphia Confessions, which in turn are based upon the Old London Confession of 1689. These 1925 articles are revised as of May, 1963, by the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Kansas City, Missouri. Copies of these articles are attached hereto.

### **IV. RELATIONSHIPS**

The government of this church is vested in its members. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligation of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist Churches. Insofar as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the association and state convention affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

## **V. CHURCH COVENANT**

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

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

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

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; remember one another in prayer; aid one another in sickness and distress; cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; and 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**

### **I. MEMBERSHIP**

#### **SECTION 1. GENERAL**

This organization shall consist of the present membership of Salem Avenue Baptist Church, and others hereafter admitted as provided in Section 2 of this article.

#### **SECTION 2. CANDIDACY**

Any person may offer himself / herself as a candidate for membership to this church at its invitation usually at the close of each worship service. All such candidates shall be presented to the church at the monthly business meeting for membership in any of the following ways:

(1) By immersion: Any person accepting Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord shall be baptized at the earliest possible date, at the discretion of the pastoral staff. Those presenting themselves for baptism shall be presented for church membership at the next regular monthly business meeting. Such persons are urged to take a course of instruction for new members taught by the Pastor and/or other qualified persons.

(2) By letter: Any person in full fellowship with another church of like faith and order may be received into full fellowship of this church upon receipt of a letter of dismissal from that church.

(3) By statement: Any person who has been a member of another church of like faith and order and has no valid letter of dismissal may be received by giving satisfactory evidence of Christian faith and conduct.

(4) By restoration: Any person whose name for any cause has been removed from the roll of this church may, upon making satisfactory explanation to the church, be restored to membership.

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 three-fourths vote of those church members voting shall be required to elect such candidate to membership.

### **SECTION 3. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

(1) Members who are in good standing may, upon their request, receive letters to unite with any other church of the same faith and order by a vote of the members of the church present at any business meeting. Letters of dismissal shall be made to the church of like faith and order and not to the individual member. When a member of this church joins a church of different faith and order, membership in this church will terminate.

(2) The church Secretary shall remove from the roll the names of members who have died.

(3) Exclusion by action of this church. (See Section 7)

### **SECTION 4. SUPPORT OF CHURCH**

Members are expected to be faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian life, to attend regularly the services of the church, to contribute regularly and systematically to its support and kingdom causes, and to share in its organized work.

### **SECTION 5. ANNUAL REVIEW OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

(1) There will be an annual review, in January, of the active and inactive church membership. This review will be done by the Pastor, Deacons, and church Secretary.

(2) Active or inactive membership shall be based on a person's involvement and participation in the church's program and its ministries.

(3) After such review is finished, active and inactive lists shall remain in the church office for use by the Pastor, Deacons, Nominating Committee, and church Secretary.

(4) The Pastor and Deacons shall make every possible effort to restore inactive members to active membership by personal contact.

## **SECTION 6. VOTING RIGHTS OF MEMBERS**

Every member of the church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in business meeting, provided the member is present or provision has been made for absentee balloting by special church action on the specific business item under consideration. Any questions in which absentee balloting are permitted must be printed in the church newsletter and bulletin at least one week before balloting is to take place.

## **SECTION 7. CORRECTIVE DISCIPLINE**

(1) Should unhappy differences arise between members, the aggrieved member shall follow, in a tender and loving spirit, the rules given by Jesus in Matthew 18:15-20. Each member shall make every effort to settle the difficulty through the mutual seeking of pardon and forgiveness from God and from one another.

(2) Should any case of gross breach of covenant or public scandal occur, the Deacons shall endeavor to restore the offender, with the advice and counsel of the Pastor, and if their efforts fail, they shall report the case to the church for its consideration and action.

## **II. CHURCH OFFICERS**

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

### **SECTION 1. PASTOR**

The Pastor shall have charge of public services for worship and instruction. He shall have general supervision of the spiritual work of the church and its various organizations and departments. He shall be an ex-officio member of all committees and boards elected by the church.

A Pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. He shall serve until the pastoral relationship is dissolved by the request of either the Pastor or the church. The vote required by the church to dissolve the relationship shall be the same as required to call the Pastor. At least thirty days notice shall be given of termination of the relationship, unless otherwise mutually agreed, with both Pastor and church seeking to follow the will of God and the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

The call of the Pastor shall take place at a meeting especially set for the purpose, which meeting shall have been announced to the membership at least one week in advance. The election shall be upon the recommendation of a special Pulpit Committee elected to seek out and recommend as Pastor a minister of the gospel whose Christian character and qualifications fit him for the responsibilities of Pastor of this church. The committee shall bring only one name at a time for consideration of the church and no nomination shall be made except by the recommendation of the committee. Election shall be by ballot with an affirmative of three-fourths of the membership present and voting necessary for a call on the first ballot. Twenty-five percent of the active membership shall constitute a quorum for calling a Pastor. Should the one recommended by the committee fail to receive three-fourths of the votes, the committee will be instructed to seek out another minister to recommend to the church.

## **SECTION 2. DEACONS**

The Deacons shall assist the Pastor in the spiritual leadership of the church. They shall be selected annually from among active male members of this church who have been members for at least two years. There shall be at least one active Deacon for every fifteen families in the church.

(1) The Nominating Committee shall at the February business meeting recommend the names of five church members to serve as a Deacon Selection Committee. Two members of the committee shall be active Deacons. Members of the committee will not succeed themselves. The Pastor will provide the Deacon Selection Committee with information on the role and qualifications of the Deacon, the process of Deacon selection, Deacons who are currently serving, Deacons who may be eligible for selection, and the number of Deacons needed. The committee will give the congregation opportunity to submit names of ordained and non-ordained men for consideration. The committee will review names submitted to them, determine scriptural qualifications, and interview candidates. Only those receiving unanimous vote of the committee will be recommended to the church. Once the needed number of candidates is approved by the committee their names will be presented at the May business meeting for church approval. Each Deacon's term shall begin July 1. Each Deacon not previously ordained shall be ordained as soon as practical. The Deacon Selection Committee shall have no further responsibilities except in the instance of a vacancy occurring prior to the election of the next Deacon Selection Committee. If such a vacancy occurs, the committee shall present a nominee to fill the unexpired term at the next regular business meeting.

(2) The Deacons shall serve on a rotation basis. Each year, the term of office of one fourth of the number of deacons shall expire. After serving a term of four years, a Deacon shall be eligible to serve again after the lapse of one year.

(3) The Deacons shall elect their own chairman who will serve a one-year term, and who will not succeed himself. The Deacons shall meet at least monthly, with a quorum being more than fifty percent.

## **SECTION 3. NOMINATED OFFICERS**

Candidates for these church offices and committees are nominated annually by the Nominating Committee and require church approval.

### **(1) Moderator**

The Moderator shall preside at all regular and special business meetings of the church. In his absence an associate Moderator shall preside. In the absence of both, the church Clerk shall call the church to order and a Moderator pro tem shall be elected.

### **(2) Clerk**

It shall be the duty of the Clerk to attend the business meetings, to maintain an accurate record of all business transactions, and to notify all officers, members of committees, and messengers of their election or appointment.

**(3) Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall pay just obligations of the church using as his/her authority either (1) a current church budget or (2) a vote of the church. He/she shall keep a book of accounts and present each month a detailed statement of all receipts and disbursements to the Finance Committee and the church. The Treasurer shall be bonded.

**(4) Trustees**

The Board of Trustees shall consist of five active members with each member serving three year terms. The Board shall choose their own chairman.

The Trustees shall have general supervision and care of all church property, keeping it in good repair. They shall be the custodian of all papers relating to church property and shall be responsible for properly insuring the property. The Trustees shall superintend all authorized church repairs and improvements and direct all janitorial work.

**(5) Other Officers**

Other officers of the church, including heads of the various teaching, training, and missionary organizations, shall be elected annually by the church upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee. These organizations shall be under church control, all officers being elected by the church and reporting regularly to the church.

**SECTION 4. CHURCH STAFF**

This church shall call or employ such staff members as the church shall need. A job description shall be written by the Personnel Committee when the need for staff members is determined. Vocational staff members other than the Pastor shall be recommended to the church by the Personnel Committee and employed by church action. At least two weeks' notice at the time of resignation should be given.

The secretaries and custodians shall like-wise be recommended to the church by the Personnel Committee and employed by church action.

**(1) Church Secretary**

The church Secretary shall have responsibility for the following: issuance of letters of dismissal as authorized by the church, giving notice of all meetings where such notice is necessary, and keeping an accurate roll of the church membership with dates and methods of admission and dismissal, change in name, correct mailing addresses and other pertinent membership information.

**(2) Financial Secretary**

The Financial Secretary shall keep a detailed record of each individual contribution to the church of \$.10 or more. Annual individual contribution statements shall be prepared and distributed according to IRS guidelines. A monthly summary of all church offerings and receipts shall be issued for the files of the Treasurer, Pastor and church Clerk.

### **III. COMMITTEES AND COORDINATING GROUPS**

#### **SECTION 1. NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

The Nominating Committee shall have three elected members serving for a period of three years. One elected member will rotate off each year and the senior member of the committee will be the chairman. The new member to the committee will be nominated by the church in a regular business meeting and elected by the church. The Minister of Education/Outreach shall be a permanent committee member.

The Nominating Committee shall have the responsibility of selecting acceptable and available candidates for the church officers and committees defined in Part 2, Section 3 and Part 3, Section 2,4, and 6. It shall determine positions to be filled, interview the selected candidates, and report all nominations to the church for consideration. This committee will not re-nominate uncritically. It will point out desired improvements and make recommendations candidly and with a Christian spirit. The committee will hold such meetings as are necessary to assure adequate workers for all positions during the year.

#### **SECTION 2. FINANCE COMMITTEE**

The Finance Committee shall prepare a proposed church budget each year and shall be responsible for an annual audit of church financial records. As necessary, the chairman of this committee shall report to the church concerning recommendations or observations of the committee pertaining to church finance. The Finance Committee shall consist of seven members, one of whom shall be the church Treasurer. The term of office (except for Treasurer) shall be three years, with two members rotating off the committee each year. A chairman shall be chosen from and by the members of the committee.

#### **SECTION 3. CHURCH COUNCIL**

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

The council shall have as regular members, the Pastor, Minister of Students, Minister of Education/Outreach, Minister of Music, Director of Woman's Missionary Union, Chairman of the Deacons, and Chairman of the Long Range Planning Committee. Committee chairmen and church elected officers shall serve as ex-officio members.

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

#### **SECTION 4. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

The Personnel Committee assists the church in matters related to employed personnel administration. Its work includes such areas as recommending staff needs, employment, salaries, benefits, and position descriptions. The committee shall consist of 4 people, serving for a period of 2 years. Two members shall rotate off the committee each year and the chairman shall be chosen from among the members.

## **SECTION 5. PULPIT COMMITTEE**

When necessary, a Pulpit Committee consisting of five members shall be elected by the church. There shall be two men, two women, and one young person. Such election shall take place in the following manner. Nominations for the two men and two women will be made from the floor of the regular business meeting. The nominations will be published in the bulletin one week prior to an election. Such election will be by secret ballot. Each church member shall have four votes (two for the men and two for the women.) The four adults elected shall then choose a responsible young person to serve on the committee. The young person shall be approved by the church. A chairman shall be elected from and by the committee. The committee remains in place until dismissed by the Moderator.

## **SECTION 6. LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The Long Range Planning Committee shall have the responsibility of planning for the next five years, annual evaluation of the plan, purposes and procedures for existing programs, and shall make an annual report to the church concerning the next five year period including recommendations for improvements. Any recommendations shall be discussed with the appropriate organization before presentation to the church. The committee shall be willing to assist any organization in their plans to reach long range objectives.

The committee shall consist of five members with one member rotating off each year. The chairman shall be selected from and by the committee.

## **SECTION 7. OTHER COMMITTEES**

The church shall elect other standing and special committees as it may deem necessary to carry on the various phases of the program of the church effectively and efficiently.

# **IV. PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONS**

## **SECTION 1. GENERAL**

All organizations of the church shall be under church control, all officers being elected by the church and reporting regularly to the church.

Southern Baptist literature is to be used in all church programs unless pre-approved by the church. The Pastor, Minister of Education/Outreach, and worker wishing to use literature, other than Southern Baptist, will review the literature under consideration and make a recommendation to the church for purchase of material if they so approve.

## **SECTION 2. SUNDAY SCHOOL**

There shall be a Sunday School, divided into departments and classes for all ages and conducted under the leadership of a director for the study of God's Word.

The tasks of the Sunday School shall be to teach the biblical revelation; lead in reaching all prospects for the church; lead all church members to worship, witness, learn, and minister daily; and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

### **SECTION 3. WOMAN'S MISSIONARY UNION**

There shall be a Woman's Missionary Union with such officers and organization as needed. This program shall be led by a Director who shall be nominated annually by the Nominating Committee, with recommendation from the WMU and elected by the church. The tasks of the Woman's Missionary Union shall be to teach missions, encourage persons to participate in missions, provide organization and leadership for special mission projects of the church, and provide and interpret information regarding the purpose of the Woman's Missionary Union in the church and the Southern Baptist denomination.

### **SECTION 4. CHURCH MUSIC PROGRAM**

There shall be a church music program led by the Minister of Music. The music tasks shall be to teach music and hymnody, provide music and musicians for the congregational services and the organizations of the church, lead persons to participate in hymn singing, and provide organization and leadership regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

## **V. MEETINGS AND FACILITIES**

### **SECTION 1. WORSHIP SERVICES**

The church shall meet every Sunday for public worship and instruction. A mid-week prayer service will be a regular part of the church program. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed at least once every quarter at the services deemed most appropriate by the Pastor and Deacons, or as designated by the church.

### **SECTION 2. CHURCH YEAR**

The church year program shall begin with the first of July in each year, and at that time the officers elected shall begin their duties. The church fiscal year shall begin July 1.

### **SECTION 3. REGULAR BUSINESS MEETINGS**

Business meetings of this church shall be held once each month on the second Wednesday. At these meetings, reports from the Deacons, chairmen of committees, Treasurer, Minister of Students, program leaders, and all church organizations shall be presented and regular business may be transacted. Ten percent of the active membership will constitute a quorum. Twenty five percent of the active membership shall constitute a quorum for calling a Pastor.

### **SECTION 4. SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS**

Special business meetings may be called either by the Moderator, Deacons, or Board of Trustees. Notice of such meeting and items of business to be considered shall be publicly given from the pulpit on the Sunday preceding the time set for the meeting or the time for such meetings must have previously been decided upon in a regular business meeting. Only those items of business announced may be considered.

## **SECTION 5. PARLIAMENTARY RULES**

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

## **SECTION 6. FACILITIES**

All activities conducted at the church shall be in accordance with the Church Building Use Policy.

## **VI. ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS**

### **SECTION 1. ADOPTION**

This Constitution and Bylaws are effective after a vote of the church beginning August 12, 1976.

### **SECTION 2. AMENDMENTS**

This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended, altered, or repealed by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at any regular business meeting for that purpose, provided that such amendment, alteration, or repeal as is proposed shall be given to the Clerk in writing, shall be presented to the church at least thirty days before the time the vote is taken, and shall be read from the pulpit to the congregation on the Lord's Day following its being presented to the church.

Part 5, Section 2 - Church year amended March 9, 1983

Part 2, Section 3 - Deacons - amended May 11, 1983, July 1988

Part 5, Section 5 - Weddings and Showers - amended October 11, 1989 (See Building Use Policy adopted by the church at the October 11, 1989 Business Meeting.)

Part 5 Section 5 - Wedding and Showers - amended March 10, 1993 (See Building Use Policy)

Part II. Church Officers, Section 8 Trustees - amended June 13, 2001

Section 3. Deacons – Change to Bylaws – January 13, 2010

Section 2. Candidacy, Part 1) – Change to Bylaws - April 14, 2010

Constitution and Bylaws updated to address relevance, organization, consistency and editorial accuracy – February 13, 2013