

*Meadowbrook Baptist
Church of Beaufort
Beaufort, South Carolina*

CONSTITUTION
AND
BY-LAWS

March 2021

Article I

Name

The name of the Corporation is **Meadowbrook Baptist Church of Beaufort**. The Corporation will be further referred to in the Bylaws as the “Church”. The Church maintains its principal office at 12 Lupo Drive, Beaufort, S.C. 29907. The Deacon Board, until placement of Elder Board, has full power and authority to change the principal office from one location to another, with approval of the Church membership at a specially called business meeting.

Article II

Purpose

- 1) Reach out to the lost world with the Gospel and encourage people to trust the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior both at home and abroad.
- 2) Worship and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ in all that we do.
- 3) Proclaim the whole counsel of the Word of God in developing people in the Christian faith.
- 4) Edify the body of Christ and encourage all believers to use their gifts and talents that the Lord has given them.
- 5) Maintain a vibrant Worship environment.
- 6) Love our neighbors through Community outreach.

Article III

Statements of Belief

1) Faith

a) We believe that the Bible as originally written, as verbally and planarity inspired, is the product of Spirit-controlled men, and therefore, is truth without any mixture of error. We believe that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God,” by which we understand the whole Bible is inspired to the sense that holy men of God “were moved by the Holy Spirit” to write the very words of Scripture. We believe that this divine inspiration extends equally and fully to all parts of the writings-----historic, poetic, doctrine, and prophetic such that the whole Bible as inspired by God is without any error.

We believe that all Scriptures center about the Lord Jesus Christ in His person and work in His first and second coming, and hence that no portion, even of the Old Testament, is properly read, or understood, until it leads to Him. We believe the Bible to be the center of true Christian unity and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions shall be tried. (Mark 12:26, 36; 13:11; Luke 24:27,44; John 5:39; Acts 1:16; 17:2-3; 18:28; 26:22-23; 28:23; Romans 15:4; 1 Cor. 2:13;10:11:II Timothy 3:16, 17:II peter 1:19, 20,21).

b) There is one true God, eternally existing in three persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit---each of whom equally possesses all the attributes of Deity and the Characteristics of personality.

c) Jesus Christ is God, the living Word, who became flesh through His miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit and His virgin birth. Hence, He is perfect Deity and true humanity united in one person forever.

d) Jesus Christ lived a sinless life and voluntarily atoned for the sins of men by dying on the cross as their substitute, thus satisfying divine justice and accomplishing salvation for all who trust in Him alone.

e) Jesus Christ rose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which He lived and died.

f) Jesus Christ ascended bodily into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God the Father, where He, the only mediator between God and man, continually makes intercession for His own.

g) Men and women are created in the image of God. All have sinned disobeying God; thus, men and women are alienated from their creator. The historic fall of Adam and Eve brought all mankind under divine condemnation.

h) Men and women's nature is corrupted, and they are totally unable to please God. Every man and women are in need of salvation by regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

i) The salvation of men and women is entirely a work of God's free grace and is not the work, in whole or in part, of human works or goodness or religious ceremony. God imputes His righteousness to those who put their faith in Christ alone for their salvation, and thereby justifies them forever in His sight.

j) It is the privilege of all who are born again of the Spirit to be assured of their salvation from the very moment in which they trust Christ as their Lord and Savior. This assurance is not based on any kind of human merit, but is produced by the witness of the Spirit, who confirms in the believer the testimony of God in His written Word.

k) The Holy Spirit has come into the world to reveal and glorify Christ and to apply the saving work of Christ to all men and women. He convicts and draws sinners to Christ, imparts new life to them, continually indwells them from the moment of spiritual birth and seals them until the day of redemption. His fullness, power and control are appropriated in the believer's life by faith. Every believer is called to live in the power of the indwelling Spirit so that he or she might not fulfill the lust of the flesh but will bear fruit to the glory of God.

l) Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church, His Body, which is composed of all men, women, living and dead, who have been joined to Him through saving faith.

m) God admonishes His People to assemble together in local churches for worship, for participation in the ordinances of believer's baptism and the Lord's Table, for edification through the Scriptures and for mutual encouragement and fellowship.

n) At physical death, the believer immediately enters into eternal, conscious fellowship with the Lord and awaits the resurrection of his or her body to everlasting glory and blessing.

o) At physical death, the unbeliever enters immediately into eternal, conscious separation in Hades away from the Lord and awaits the resurrection of his or her body to everlasting judgment and condemnation in the Lake of Fire.

p) Jesus Christ will come again to the earth personally, visibly, and bodily to consummate history and the eternal plan of God.

q) The Lord Jesus Christ commanded all believers to proclaim the gospel throughout the world and to disciple men of every nation in the context of the local church. The fulfillment of the Great Commission requires that all worldly and personal ambitions be subordinated to a total commitment to "Him who loved us and gave Himself for us."

2) Marriage, Gender and Sexuality

a) We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as biologically male or biologically female from the moment of conception.

These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Gen 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person. Therefore, throughout this document masculine terms shall mean someone who God created as a biological male and feminine terms shall mean someone who God created as a biological female.

b) We believe the term "marriage" has only one meaning; the uniting of one biological man and one biological woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Gen 2:18-25).

c) We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur between a biological man and a biological woman who are married to each other. (1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a biological man and a biological woman. We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matt 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 6: 9-10.)

d) We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Meadowbrook Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the Meadowbrook, Church members and the community. It is imperative that all persons seeking membership in Meadowbrook Church, being employed by Meadowbrook Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Matt 5:16; Phil. 2: 14-16; 1 Thess. 5:22).

e) We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor. 6:9-11). We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31.) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of this Church.

Article IV

Membership

1) Requirements

- a) Giving testimony of having personally trusted Jesus Christ as his or her personal savior with verification by the Senior Pastor.

b) Agreement with the Church Statement of Faith in Article

c) Support the leadership of the Church and share in the mission of sharing the Gospel with the lost.

d) Commitment to live by the membership covenant contained in Article IV, 2 below.

2) Membership Covenant

a) I will protect the unity of my Church by acting in love toward other members, by refusing to participate in gossip, and by following the leaders as they follow Christ (Rom. 15:5, 19; 1 Peter 1:22; Ephesians 4:29; Hebrews 13:17).

b) I will share in the responsibility of my Church by praying for its growth, inviting the non churched to attend, and warmly welcome those who attend (1Thess. 2:2; Luke 4:23; Romans 15:7).

c) I will serve the ministry of my Church by discovering my spiritual gift(s) and talents, being equipped to serve by my Pastors, by cultivating a servant's heart, and by contributing regularly of my time, talents, and resources (1Peter 4:10; Ephesians 4:11-12; Philippians 2:3-4,7).

d) I will support the testimony of my Church by participating faithfully in the ministries of the Church and living a Christ-like life before the world (Hebrews 10:35; Philippians 1:27; 1 Cor. 16:2).

3) Voting Rights

a) Voting by proxy is prohibited.

b) Every member 18 years or older is entitled to one vote on the following matters:

- 1) Annual budget of the Church
- 2) Acquisition of real property and related indebtedness if they exceed \$50000.00
- 3) Disposition of all or substantially all of the assets of the Church.
- 4) Merger or dissolution of the Church.
- 5) Amendments to the Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws of the Church.
- 6) Any other matter which is deemed necessary by the Deacon Board, or until placement of an Elder Board.

4) Termination of Membership

a) Members shall be removed from the Church roles for the following reasons

- 1) Transfer of membership to another Church
- 2) By personal request of the member
- 3) As the result of church discipline as set forth in (Matt 18:15-17)

5) Restoration of Membership

a) When returned to the qualifications set forth in Article IV, Membership requirements.

6) Non-liability of Members

a) A member of the Church shall not, because of such participation, be personally liable for the debts, obligations, or liabilities of the Church.

Article V

Church Leadership

1) General

a) The leadership of the Church is based upon the nature of the Church revealed in Scripture. Likewise, one uniquely qualified, ordained, and called spiritual leader as Pastor is the Overseer Servant Leader of the Church. This person is assisted in the many duties of ministry in the Church by the Deacon Board, until placement of an elder board, as specified below.

b) It is the prayerful wishes of the current leadership at Meadowbrook Church that God will provide this fellowship with a number of qualified Elders such that we may move to an Elder Guided Leadership of the Church as revealed in Scripture, as apposed to the current Pastor and Deacon model. Elders are individuals gifted by the Holy Spirit to prophecy, ordained to the preaching ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and gifted with spiritual wisdom, discernment, and thoroughly knowledgeable of the Holy Scriptures.

2) Deacons

a) Qualifications: Each Deacon shall understand, agree with, and commit to follow the church's Doctrinal Statement. Only men who are members of this church and who are of high Christian Servant Leader character and integrity, possessing the qualifications as given in Acts 6:1-4, and in Timothy 3:8-13, which are outlined below, shall be selected as a Deacon.

1) Must be servants and tend to the day to day business of the church under the direction of the Senior Pastor, in order to free the Senior Pastor for equipping the saints and building up the body of Christ (Acts 6:2-3)

2) Must be honest men, not given to much wine, not greedy, and one who rules his own house well, and found blameless in handling the matters of the church with integrity. (1 Tim 3: 7&11.)

3) Whose wife is sober, faithful in all things, and not a gossip or quick tempered. (1 Tim 3:11).

b) Responsibilities as set forth in the Deacons Handbook.

c) Selection, Affirmation and Composition of the Deacon Board.

1) When qualified men are carefully identified based on the criteria set forth in Article V.2, recommended by the Senior Pastor, and agreed upon by the Deacon Board, they will be presented to the church body for affirmation by a majority vote of those members present at the properly noticed affirmation meeting, and then set apart for the service to which God has called them. This will be followed by ordination when applicable. (Acts 6:1-7).

2) The senior Pastor is a member of the Deacon Board by virtue of the office held.

3) All duly selected and affirmed Deacons will be members of the Deacon Board.

4) It is desirable to have a minimum of three Deacons, but a minimum of three is not required if qualified men have not been identified by the Senior Pastor and agreed upon by the Board of Deacons, until placement of an Elder Board. There is no maximum number of Deacons. This will be determined based on the needs of the Church along with the number of men that meet the qualifications in Article V.3.a.

5) Deacons will serve for periods of not more than 4 years. After that Deacon's term is completed, he may be asked by the Board of Deacons to serve another term, but normally will take a one year leave of absence to permit another man to serve. Following that one year leave of absence, the man will be considered to reappointment within the criteria set forth above.

6) Deacon's will select one Deacon to be the Deacon Board Chairman for a one year term and may be requested to serve no more than one additional year as Chairman of Deacons.

7) The Deacon's Board will meet every other month, if Church business demands, but no less often than once a quarter.

8) Any Deacon failing to attend more than one third of the Deacon Board Meetings, could be asked to resign from active service, as agreed upon by a majority of the Deacon Board. Attendance at the Deacon Board Meetings is a measure of quality in the role of Servant Leader.

b) Deacon Emeritus: An Honorary Position provided for select Deacons who have served over many years yet are now retired from the active service. These special Deacons will have a standing invitation to attend all Deacon Board Meetings, yet not mandatory. They shall no longer maintain a voting right as a Deacon, yet their input on major decisions will be regarded as significant .

3) The Church Staff will be called by the Senior Pastor. The staff shall perform all of the duties of the church as set forth in the job description written by the Senior Pastor. All duties will be performed at the direction of the Senior Pastor.

Article VI

Officers

The staff of the Church shall include the Senior Pastor and Pastoral Staff as needed to include, but not be limited to, Ministry Assistant, Children's Ministry Director, Youth Ministry Director, Worship Leader, Secretary/Receptionist and Maintenance Director.

1) Senior Pastor: That individual called to serve as such by a Pastoral Selection Ministry Team, approved by The Deacon Board until placement of an Elder Board and 75% of the Church Membership at a special business meeting.

2) The Pastoral Staff shall include staff as required,

3) The Moderator will be designated by the Senior Pastor, approved by the church membership, and shall preside at all business meetings of the Church consistent with the guidelines for presiding officer in the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order, and other Special Functions to be designated by the Senior Pastor.

In the absence of the Moderator the Senior Pastor shall serve as acting Moderator.

4) Trustees: These specially elected officials shall have and hold the title to the church property and shall perform such duties as required by law, subject to the approval of the Church. They shall insure the necessary insurance on the Property, and insure proper safe keeping of such papers by the Church Senior Pastor.

Article VII

Meetings

The Senior Pastor, or in the event the Senior Pastor is incapacitated the Chairman of Deacons, until placement of an Elder Board, and in consultation with the Senior Pastor, shall schedule all business meetings.

All business meetings will be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order. Such meetings shall be noticed in accordance with Article VII.1 below and any information necessary for the vote will be provided.

1) General Requirements for Notification:

a) Whenever members are asked to vote, notice shall be given to members, at least one week prior to a meeting.

2) Notice of Certain Agenda Items

a) Notification of the members for any of the following proposals is valid only if the notice specified the general nature of the proposal.

1) Calling or discharge of a Pastor. (75% of members present is a deciding number)

2) Amending the Articles of Incorporation

3) Adopting, amending, or repealing By Laws.

4) Disposing of all or substantially all of the Church's assets.

- 5) Adopting or amending a merger agreement.
 - 6) Approving the acquisition of real property and related indebtedness in excess of \$50,000.
- 3) Quorum
 - a) Those members present and voting at a meeting duly noticed and called shall constitute a quorum of the membership for the transaction of business.

Article VIII

Finances

1) Annual Budget:

- a) The Church shall have an annual budget to serve as the normative guide for the financial operation of the Church.

2) Budget Management

- a) The Budget is to be managed by the Financial Ministry Team, until the time of the hiring of a Pastor of Administration. Both will be under the oversight of the Senior Pastor and assisted therein by various members of the Church Staff according to their area of responsibility. Modifications within the budget can be made by the Deacon Board, until placement of an Elder Board, if extenuating circumstances in the life of the Church mandate such a change.

3) Summaries and Annual Review.

- a) A semi annual summary of the financial status of the Church shall be provided to the members. A detailed annual review shall be provided to the Church Members.

4) Fiscal Year

- a) The Church fiscal year shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31, with the Annual Meeting to be held before the end of March of the following year.

5) Records and Reports.

- a) The Church shall maintain the following records and reports:

1) Adequate and current books and records of accounts (financial records), and Business Meetings.

2) Written minutes of proceedings of The Deacon Board, The Elder Board at such time of placement, Building Ministry Team, or any and all other specially appointed Boards or Ministry Teams.

3) A record of the members of the Church, setting forth the names and addresses.

4) Contribution statements for contributors.

Article IX

Real Property

1) Title: A Title to all real property of the Church shall be in the name of the Church.

2) Real property may be purchased in the name of, and on behalf of the Church by the recommendation from the Senior Pastor, approval by the Deacon Board, until placement of an Elder Board, and approval by the Church Membership for all such property valued in excess of \$50,000, as detailed in Article VII of this document.

3) The disposition of Real Property may be by sale, mortgage, conveyed, transferred, or otherwise disbursed with the same process for approval as set for above purchase.

Article X

Tax Exempt Organization

The term for which the Church has been organized and incorporated is perpetual and it shall operate as a tax-exempt organization under the United States Internal Revenue Code.

In the event of dissolution of the Church, the assets therefore shall be liquidated and distributed by first paying all creditors, and all remaining assets shall then be distributed to the Savannah River Baptist Association (SRBA), If at the time of dissolution, the SRBA is not in existence then all assets will be distributed to the South Carolina Baptist Convention.

Article XI

Incorporation

It is the desire and intent that the Church shall operate as a corporate entity not-for-profit pursuant to the South Carolina Act of 1994. None of its funds shall insure to the benefit of any individual connected with the organization, except in consideration of services rendered.

Accordingly, all references to the “Church” herein shall be interpreted to be references to the “Corporation” as that term is defined under the South Carolina Nonprofit Corporation Act of 1994, and the Officers of the Church, specifically the Senior Pastor, Pastor of Administration, Moderator, and Trustees shall have the same definitional meaning and authority to bind the Church as the same officers referred to under said Act.

Article XII

Affiliations

The Church shall have full power and authority to associate itself with and participate in organizations in keeping with the character and purpose of the Church as set forth in these Constitution and By-Laws. The Church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs, independent of any denominational control. Recognizing, however, the benefits of cooperation with other Churches in world missions, this Church voluntarily affiliates with the Southern Baptist Convention.

Article XIII

Amendments

All requests for amendments to these Bylaws must be in writing and shall be submitted to the Senior Pastor for study and consideration. The Senior Pastor shall issue a timely response to the proposed amendment, alteration, or revision, with referral to the Deacon Board, until placement of an Elder Board, regarding whether to approve such proposed amendments, and referral to the Church Membership for adoption. If proposed to the Church for approval, any such amendment must be approved by 75% of the membership present at a specially called meeting just for the amendment consideration.